DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 273 504 SO 017 133

AUTHOR	Scott, John A., Ed.; Seidman, Laurence I., Ed.
TITLE	Folksong in the Classroom. Volume I, Numbers 1-4, 1980-81.
PUB DATE	81
NOTE	65p.; For other volumes in this series, see SO 017 134-137. Small print in portions of this document may affect legibility.
AVAILABLE FROM	Folksong in the Classroom, Laurence I. Seidman, 140 Hill Park Avenue, Great Neck, NY 11021 ($1.50 per volume).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Folksong in the Classroom; v1 n1-4 Mar-May 1980-81
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Colonial History (United States); Elementary Secondary Education; English Literature; *Folk Culture; Humanities Instruction; Instructional Materials; Learning Activities; *Music Activities; *Music Appreciation; *Music Education; Popular Culture; Resource Materials; Social History; *Social Studies; United States History; United States Literature; *Vocal Music

ABSTRACT

The first volume of a newsletter designed to promote the integration of folksong into the social studies, literature, or humanities classroom, this publication contains the first four issues of the newsletter which together offer a compilation of folksongs from various historical periods and cultures. Material is divided into four parts. Part A, Issue 1, describes the goals and objectives of the publication and contains three songs and commentary on how to use the songs in the classroom. Part B, Issue 2, focusing on songs of Britain, Ireland, and Scotland, includes six songs, background information, and teaching suggestions. Part C, Issue 3, consists of eight songs and background material on colonial America. Part D, Issue 4, which focuses on songs of the American cowboy, includes eight folksongs and supporting material. Checklists of additional free materials accompany parts B and D. (LP)

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FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES – A NEWSLETTER

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A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES – A NEWSLETTER

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(Folksinger, Maine)

Volume I, # 1
March 1980

Dear Colleagues:

Here is the first issue of a FOLKSONG NEWSLETTER which Tony and I prepared. We are mailing it to over a thousand classroom teachers, supervisors, librarians and audio-visual people whom we have worked and sung with in the past few years.

We hope to have the newsletter appear four times a year. We are approaching organizations such as the National Endowment for the Humanities for a grant to help meet basic printing and mailing expenses; but fund raising will take time. Meanwhile wont you please send in $1.50 minimum to cover the cost of the first four issues.

It is important, in getting financial help, to show the existence of a need. Your letters here would be most useful. If you feel that the idea is viable, and that a need exists, won't you please take a minute of your time to write us a note about any or all of the following:

* Why you want this newsletter to appear

* How you might utilize it

*The use and value of folk song in your classroom

We have found again and again that teachers want to share with others what they are doing in their classrooms. So write and tell us of your experiences: what worked for you, what didn't -- songs that went well, techniques that got students singing and excited. We will do our part reviewing books and records that might be helpful to you, presenting songs and ideas that we ourselves have tried and tested.

Cordially,

Tony Scott & Laurie Seidman

EDITORIAL COMMENT

We welcome the formation of *Folksong in the Classroom*, and will do our best to prepare a newsletter dealing with ways in thich we as professionals may best utilize folksong in our classrooms. In order to make this a real network in which people learn from each others' experiences and thinking, we ask that you, the readers

* take time out of your busy lives to communicate with us. Tell us what you are doing, in what ways you feel your work may be of use and of interest to others.

** prepare short articles for publication on any aspect of folksong in the classroom that is in your opinion important.

*** Send us the names and addresses of colleagues or friends who might wish to receive the *Newsletter*. Be sure, of course, to discuss the project with them before sending in their names.

**** Mold the development of the newsletter by suggesting topics which should be dealt with.

***** Volunteer yourself as an editor whose assignment is to collect information about classroom folksong activities in your school , town, or region; and send this information on to us.

OFJECTIVES of *Folksong in the Classroom*

The editors submit the following "Objectives" for discussion, addition, and approval.

(1)

To organize programs at national and regional meetings to promote the use of folksong in the classroom

(2)

To promote communication among professionals dedicated to utilizing folksong as part of their educational equipment.

(3)

To review books and records and provide bibliographical and other guides to folksong.

(4)

To publish articles dealing with problems and challenges in the classroom use of folksong.

(5)

To build a folksong kit by making available lyrics and melodies of proven value in classroom use.

(6)

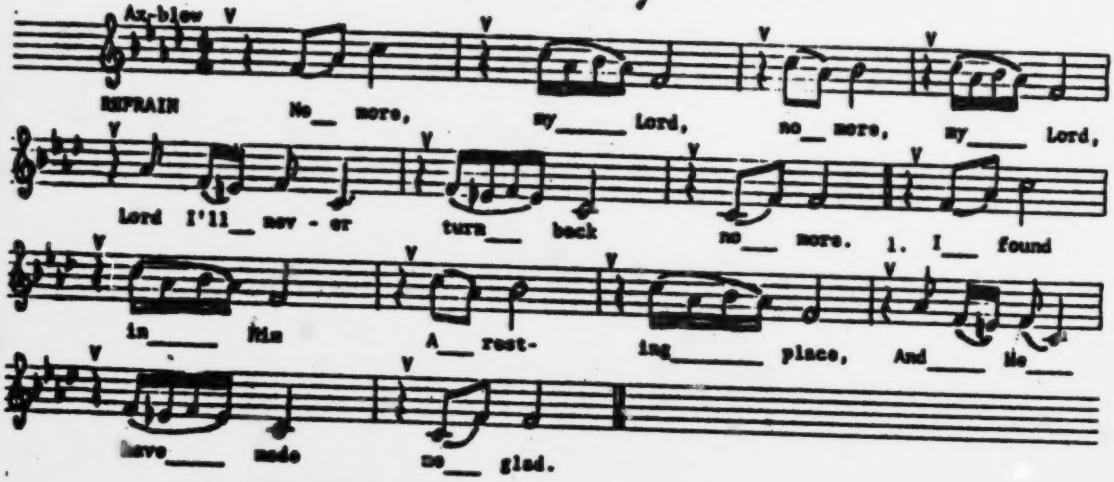
To explore the interdisciplinary significance of the folksong art and its use in promoting international goodwill.

Songkit *NO MORE, MY LORD* *LEAVE HER, JOHNY, LEAVE HER*

We sang these songs with you at Portland. Both are work songs, both have melodies, lyrics and refrains of soaring beauty. Classroom appeal is often instant. Students love these song, and love to sing them.

NO MORE, MY LORD is believed to have been sung by Black men and women before the Civil War, when as slaves they cleared away the standing timber in the deep South-- so that the masters might plant cotton. The ax falls on the first beat, all day til work is done. The words are profound, of unbelievable simplicity.

LEAVE HER, JOHNNY, LEAVE HER is a sea shanty, or work song used by seamen while hauling in the sails (sheets). With the refrain added on, this became a capstan shanty sung when the ship was being 'warped' in, or drawn to the side of the dock. About to leave the vessel, the sailors now unloaded complaints which, if uttered on the high seas, would have brought instant punishment. Historical use: U.S. overseas trade/ immigration from Europe during the Jackson Era.

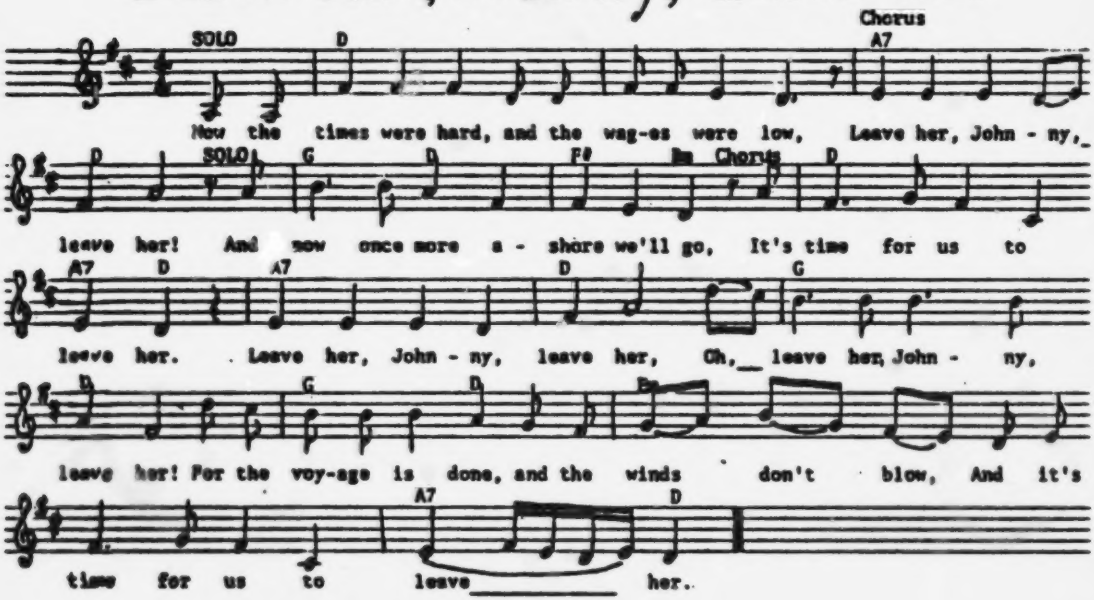
No More, My Lord

Ax-blow
REFRAIN
No more, my Lord, no more, my Lord,
Lord I'll nev - er turn back no more. 1. I found
in Him A rest- ing place, And He
have made me glad.

2. Jesus the man
I am looking for,
Can you tell me
Where He's gone?

3. Go down, go down
Among flowergard
And perhaps you may find,
Find Him there.

Collected, adapted and arranged by Alan Lomax. Copyright 1947 Essex Music Ltd., London, England. All publication rights controlled by Ludlow Music, Inc., New York, N.Y. for the U.S.A. and Canada. Transcribed by John Anthony Scott from "Negro Prison Songs," Tradition Records 1020. Used by permission.

Leave Her, Johnny, Leave Her



She would not wear, and she would not stay,
Chorus Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
She shipped great seas both night and day,
Chorus And it's time for us to leave her. *Full Chorus*

It was rotten meat and weevily bread
Chorus Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
Eat it or starve, the Old Man said,
Chorus And it's time for us to leave her. *Full Chorus*

Oh the winds were foul and the work was hard,
Chorus Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
From Liverpool dock to the Brooklyn yard,
Chorus And it's time for us to leave her. *Full Chorus*

The sails are all furled and the work is all done,
Chorus Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
And homeward now we've made our run,
Chorus And it's time for us to leave her. *Full Chorus*

I thought I heard the Old Man say,
Chorus Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
Tomorrow you will get your pay.
Chorus And it's time for us to leave her. *Full Chorus*

Now it's time for us to say goodbye,
Chorus Leave her, Johnny, leave her!
The old pierhead is drawing nigh,
Chorus And it's time for us to leave her. *Full Chorus*

SONGKIT

The Castle of Dromore

Here is the melody of the beautiful Irish lullaby which we sang at Portland, and which people of Irish descent are still singing in New England and New York.

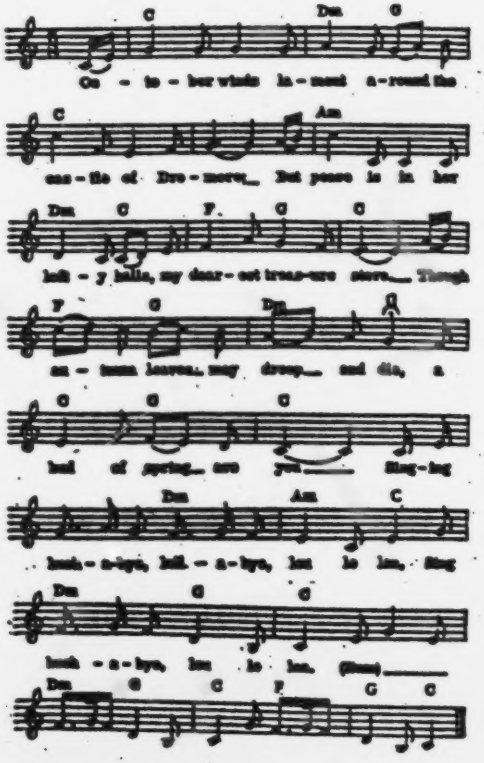
Traditionally, this is one of the most ancient of Irish songs, dating back to the early middle ages. In Eire it is still sung in the native Gaelic; translated in the early 19th century into English, it has found its way in this form to the United States.

Classroom uses:

lullaby (kindergarten and early grades)

the Irish contribution to U.S. music; the meaning of ethnic diversity in terms of song (high school and college)

the contribution of translators of song. The creative significance of the translator's art.

The history of U.S. immigration (Jacksonian Era) -- music in the Colonial times.

C Dm G
Co - te - her winds in - sent a - round the
C Am
cas - tle of Dro - more, But peace is in her
Dm C F C C
bill - y hills, my dear - est trea - sure store. Though
F C Dm A
au - tumn leaves may drop and die, a
C C C
bud of spring are yet sing - ing
Dm Am C
hush - a - bye, bil - a - bye, lus lo lan, sing
Dm C C
hush - a - bye, lus lo lan, (sing)
Dm C C F G C

Bring no ill will to hinder us, my helpless babe and me,
Dread spirits of the black water, Clanowen's wild banshee;
And holy Mary pitying us, in Heaven for grace that is true,
Singing hushabye, billabye, lus lo lan, sing hushabye lus lo lan.

Take time to thrive my ray of hope in the garden of Dromore,
Take heed young eaglet that thy wings are feathered fit to soar;
A little rest, and then the world is full of work to do,
Singing hushabye, billabye, lus lo lan, sing hushabye lus lo lan.

FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES - A NEWSLETTER

Vol. I # 2
October 1980

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Readers' Comments, Suggestions & Questions followed by Editorial Response

(Feel free to write directly to these people or to us about any issue raised in the newsletter - - It's a vehicle for sharing and learning)

"I am an elementary music teacher and I attempt to tie-in music with every subject being taught. Folksongs work in beautifully with social studies, particularly in the 4th & 5th grades and the children love to sing them."

Maxine M. Rodman
221 Pekin Road
Woodland, Wash 98674

****

Editorial comment:

Can you list some of the songs you use and some of the books? Where do you get your background materials from? How much do the classroom teachers work with you? Do the teachers use the songs on their own?

"With every song I need background. Since I switched schools, I even need biographical info - we'll have to start finding appropriate books (stories & music) before I can start teachers doing their own projects.

At this moment, a feeble movement toward the gifted and talented seems worth encouraging -- and music is right on the money for that...I can tell you that this school librarian needs fresh ideas, materials always. I cherish my role as innovator.

GO GO GO And tell us that you still go on the road, so that I can pass that word too...You have a believer here."

Helen E. Bryant
820 E. Mitchell
Kendallville, IND 46755

Editors' Comments to preceding letters:
Dear Helen and Maxine:

Teachers and librarians working together is a fine way to build up background materials for the songs you'll use with students. If, for example, you were doing John Henry, quite a few books have been written on various reading levels and for various ages. If you tell or read children the story of John Henry and then follow through with the song, this is one classroom experience they will not forget.

John Henry tells about the working people who built this country, the skills and strengths needed to create railroads and dig tunnels. It involves geography -tracing the B&O Railroad, the mountians, etc. Higher grades can approach such ideas as the need for workmen's compensation, safety rules, wages. Moral issues are involved -- why did John Henry take such pride in his work? Why were his fellow workers so proud of him? What was at stake in this contest between John Henry and the steam drill? The song is an old one- over a hundred years - yet it deals with modern problems facing workers today such as automation, the replacement of man by machine.

John Henry too offers fabulous possibilities of art work: each child will have a different picture of what John Henry looked like, the scene in the tunnel, the train going through with its whistle blowing, the contest between man and machine. There can be drawings, paintings, sculpture, murals, dioramas, dramatics, dance, weavings, hangings.

There are two fine books by authors who tried to track down the 'real' John Henry. Guy B. Johnson, Tracking Down A Negro Legend.
University of North Carolina Press, 1929 (op)

Louis W. CHappell. John Henry: A Folklore Study
Kennikat Press, New York 1968

The discussions and writings, poetry that can come out of this are also unlimited. Copies of the song with words and music may be found in almost every folksong collection. And we merely use John Henry as an example. Almost every folksong lends itself to all of the above possibilities.

As for Helen's idea of using folksongs with the gifted, has anyone tried that yet? We have found that one of the big pluses for folksong was that it appeals to all children, to the bright and quick as well as those who are not verbal or academically-oriented. It reaches out and involves all students. When using songs we are not just dealing on the intellectual level but we are appealing to the heart and soul as well. Words, music, rhythm all combine to touch us in our deepest selves, to hear the song over and over, to learn it and sing it.

"The idea of Folksong in the Classroom is important to me as a classroom teacher, who uses it as a vital part of teaching.

The students at first resented the idea of using folk singing as a teaching aide. With continued use and further efforts toward applying the songs to the proper era, they have come to look forward to the times we spend singing.

Music is an international language in spite of the differances of musical taste. Music is all about us and has become a part of everyday activity."

Jean Laidlaw
722 Highland Avenue
Oakland City IN 47660
(Soc. Studies Ch., Gibson Southern
High School)

Editorial Comments

Very important what Jean says, and very true. You may run into some resistance at first - it's really mostly shyness and uncertainty; too often the students do not know how to handle their own feelings about your singing or their being asked to sing. But persist! If you just relax, work with those who do sing and sort of overlook those who don't, gradually these latter students will be won over. Sitting back, seeing that they're not forced to sing, that there's no criticism of them; that the other students, usually the majority are enjoying it, they will be won over by the beauty of the song and the tune. They will end up joining in. And these are not strangers that you are teaching - they are your students: they know you and you have a relationship with them that will help you along.

Music is an important part of your students' lives: you are not asking them to substitute folksong for their own music; you are merely inviting them to enlarge the area of their awareness and their pleasure.

Many folksongs, too, have the same themes as today's music -- love, defiance of convention and the generation gap, doing your own thing, freedom. Older students can trace these eternal themes and compare the ways in which they are expressed by people in different generations.

****

"I have taught social studies to grades 5 through 11 during the past ten years. Among juniors the response to folksong has been very spotty, but then so is every other technique I've used with them! My preference in teaching is for 6th, 7th and 8th graders and among these groups the techniques that folksong can employ work very well.

Each year I quake before the first time I try folksong with my 8th grade U.S. History (1492-1876) classes, but for four years now I have had moderate success. The response of students to my singing and suggesting that they sing at first ranges from amusement to astonishment - but mostly they do sing. And they do learn and even request re-singing of some favorites.

Those songs that have given best feedback are the ones with strong messages of violence, love and/or hero-villain conflict. The Golden Vanity, when we study the explorers, is a favorite with the boys. Two Sisters, an excellent ballad to show the evolution of culture and customs from England through colonial Virginia, is a favorite with girls.

I spend much time on background information and direct a very structured study of the songs' vocabulary. Also, I use conjecture by students with songs - such as the Two Sisters - that do not explain themselves thoroughly. We tie-in geography - -place names, significant weather patterns or surface features -- whatever fits. I studiously accept any quality of singing and try to emphasize that we are all folk, not professionals; that the goals for folksong have been entirely different from those for the professional singer.

Background for folksong is much harder to come by than the songs themselves. That is where a newsletter could help me tremendously - even if only with a list of source titles.

Evaluating learing from folksong is another tough problem. Perhaps if all teachers could share their experiences, we'd all gain.

There are two areas I've not worked in, but feel I should if I could. One is encouraging students to gather local examples of folksong - rope-skipping rhymes or work songs of whatever. The second is finding and working with others locally who try to use folksong in teaching. Any advice about how to proceed?"

Peggy Hummel
Route 1 Box 51
Ridgeville, IN 47380

****

Editorial comments to Peggy's letter:

On encouraging students to gather local folksong:

(1) ask them to recall their own early childhood days - rope skipping rhymes, jump rhymes, ball bouncing rhymes; (2) have them ask their parents and grandparents; (3) talk with the gym teacher (4) have students observe on the primary and elementary playgrounds (5) invite a senior citizen to class and have him/her talk about their childhood —it is amazing what wonderful memories many older people have, especially how they remember childhood rhymes, games and songs. (6) visit a senior citizen home with your class. Have students prepare questionaires, take tape recorders, phtographs (with permission, of course) (7) write to local folksong or folklore organization (8) ask your music teacher, librarian - they're very knowledgeable and helpful people (When with senior citizens ask them directly about folksongs-share the ones your class knows with them- this often gets them to remember others and to sing them

As for Peggy's second request: here's the chance and the vehicle for you to exchange ideas with others - both successes and failures; how did you introduce folksong into your classroom; if you haven't yet, what are some of your anxieties or reasons for hesitating? Let it all hang out! Here we have a chance to help each other - to talk directly with people facing similar problems. Our reading audience is growing.To make the Newsletter as useful as possible, send us your ideas, suggestions and questions. We'll print them up for all to see; or write directly to the addresses given.

****

"What a wonderful surprise it was to receive the first newsletter. I support heartily the idea and concur with its objectives. Such a newsletter will be very useful to me in a number of ways. I will use it with my pre-service teachers at both Holy Name and Mills Colleges as well as with in-service teachers at workshops which I am often asked to present. I also intend to capitalize on ideas and suggestions in the writing of textbooks and other student materials which I produce.

...Congratulations on a good beginning and best wishes for the future."

Margaret Branson
Assoc. Porf. Education
Holy Name & Mills Colleges
home address: 523 Hampton Road
Piedmnot, CA 94611

"Yes, I would like very much to be placed on your mailing list for materials I could find useful in my social studies classes.

I love to use music as part of the curriculum, both for motivation and content."

Ray Leeds
South Woods Jr. High
Pell Lane
Syosset, NY 11791

Editorial Comments:

DEar Ray-Could you please be a little more specific as to just how you utilize music in your social studies program- share a few of your sources, songs, techniques with other readers. Your enthusiasism is bound to be catching and your information helpful.

If you have a local Social Studies, English, Music, Humanities Council or organization, you might want to write to them about us, asking them to put a notice about our newsletter into their journal; or inviting their members to join. Or send us their addresses and person to contact and we'll write them.

"Positive response from class even with my limited ability. Absolutely no problem in coordination with curriculum. We also had a student resident musician from college who played the fiddle and explained the folksongs she played. She was assigned to our school system on a federal grant."

Charles E. Taylor, Jr.
Mt. Vernon High School
home address: P.O. Box 224
Evansville, IN 47702

Editors Comments:

As for Charles' modest remark about "limited ability", this is the whole point. First of all, most of us have more talent than we realize. Second, it is the enthusiasm of the teacher and his/her rapport with the class that is important, rather than the musical ability or beautiful voice, and it is this that sweeps the students along.

Usually, once they get over the first shock of your breaking into song, it is the beauty of the story line and the melody that grips the students and makes them want to participate. All of us can sing. If you can talk, you can sing (not like a porfessional, perhaps, but that is neither necessary or desirable. In fact, if you are too professional, you may overwhelm the students who feel they can not compete with you. The point is not to compete, but to share.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies, New Orleans, November 1980

The Editors of that dashing and widely read periodical Folksong In the Classroom(an excellent newsletter I've heard) Tony Scott & Laurie Seidman, will hold a session at the NCSS meeting, November 28, Friday, on "Folksong as a Catalyst in Social Studies Education." 8:45-10:00 a.m., Prince of Wales Room, Hilton International Hotel. We'd be delighted to see any of you who are going and please alert your friends and associates in the LA area to this event.

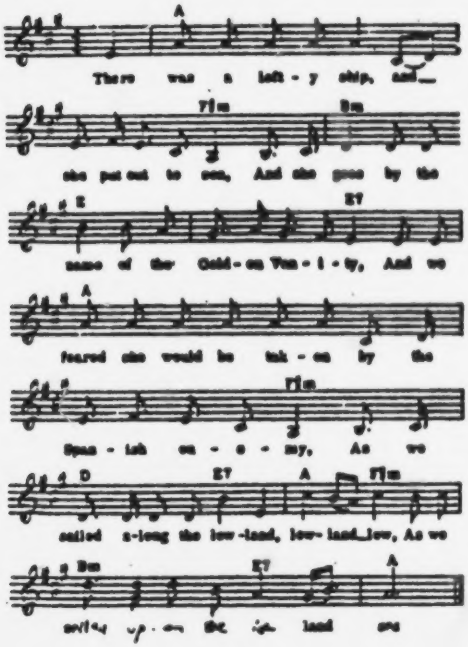
We will also hold a meeting of the Executive Board of the Newsletter at a time and place to be announced at the Friday morning session

LET'S SEND OUT THE WORD - - -

We would like to spread the good news about Folksong in the Classroom. If each of you would send us one or two names of interested colleagues - from all grade levels or subject areas - we would be glad to add them to our mailing list.

SONGS TO TEACH WITH

With this issue we begin reproduction of songs taken from all periods of the American past, whose value in teaching at all levels has been proven by the collective experience of classroom teachers. The first category we offer is The British Heritage. Sung over the centuries in the British Isles, these songs were brought to North America and sung throughout the vast new land wherever settlers penetrated. In this sense, these beautiful old British songs are also songs of the American frontier.

Which would you like in the next issue: Colonial songs? Labor songs? Songs of the sea? Songs of the Civil War? Songs of Black people? Let us know.

Oh, we had a little cabin boy, and boldly up spoke he,
And he said to the captain, "What will you give me,
If I'll swim alongside of the Spanish enemy,
And I sink her in the lowland, lowland low,
If I sink her in the lowland sea?"

"Of gold and silver I will give you few,
And my only daughter your bonny bride to be,
If you'll swim alongside of the Spanish enemy
And you sink them in the lowland, lowland, low,
If you sink them in the lowland sea."

Then the boy bared his breast and overboard sprang he,
And he swam til he came to the Spanish enemy,
Then with his auger sharp in her sides he bored holes three,
And he sank her in the lowland, lowland low,
He sank her in the lowland sea.

Now some were playing at cards and some were playing at dice,
And some were sitting by giving very good advice,
Until the salt water it flashed into their eyes.
And it sank them in the lowland, lowland low,
It sank them in the lowland sea.

Then the boy swam back to the cheering of the crew
But the captain would not head him, for his promise he did rue,
And he scorned his proud entreaties, though full loudly he did
sue,
And he left him in the lowland, lowland low,
He left him in the lowland sea.

So the boy swam round til he came to the larboard side,
And to his messmates bitterly he cried,
"Oh messmates pick me up, for I'm drifting with the tide,
And I'm sinking in the lowland, lowland low,
I'm sinking in the lowland sea."

Then his messmates took him up, and upon the deck he died,
And they sewed him in his hammock, which was so large and
wide,
And they lowered him overboard, and he drifted with the tide,
And he sank beneath the lowland, lowland low,
He sank beneath the lowland sea.

"The Golden Vanity" has been sung far and wide in the New World -- throughout Canada, Newfoundland, and the United States. It expresses vividly the realities of the Age of Exploration when western European nations engaged in a bitter struggle for empire and slugged out their rivalries upon the high seas.

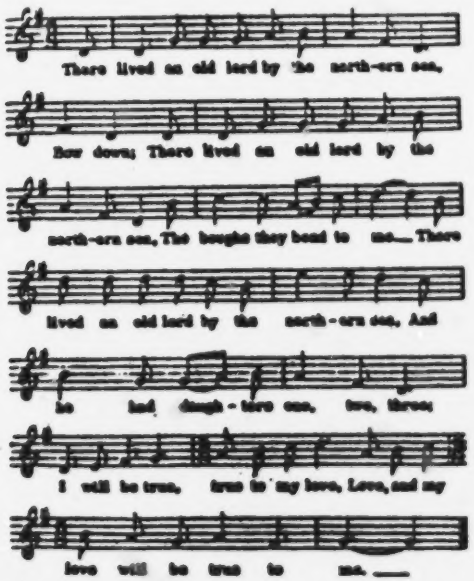
"The Golden Vanity" has been an all-time favorite with young people who identify easily and completely with the little cabin boy. During the age of sail, too, it was much-loved and much-sung by British and American seamen. Students might be asked to speculate why? Possible answers: (1) the song celebrates the majesty and mystery of the sea that was the seaman's daily companion in life and death; (2) it expresses the reality of evil in the person of the captain. All seamen knew well that a captain who abused his power, as many did, could make of a sailing ship a hell on earth; (3) it exalts the unselfishness of an ordinary anonymous mortal who will die for his friends.

Each verse of "The Golden Vanity" offers wonderful art possibilities. A student who could translate the eight verses or "frames" into visual form could tell the story in the form of a "tragistrip." Or a group of students could work upon such a project.

The Two Sisters

The Two Sisters* is one of the oldest of our Anglo-American ballads. Sung for centuries in the British Isles, it has been found in virtually every state of the Union. Students might be encouraged to dance as they sing this song; it will help them see the wonderful subtleties in the refrain, the play of words in 'bough' and 'bow.' As you dance you bow to your partner; the boughs bend to the person who seeks to command the world; yes, and they also bow beneath the weight of a corpse.

The young man's gift of a 'gay gold ring' is clear enough, but 'beaver hat' needs a little explanation. In the olden days only the wealthy could afford to buy or wear beaver hats; a beaver hat was a splendid gift, one of which the older sister might well be jealous. Note that the struggle between the sisters is not only for a man, but also for land; in early times a man's son inherited all his land, but if he only had daughters then they shared equally in the inheritance.

For student research and discussion: why was the miller an important figure in the early village community? What did he do for the people, and what was the 'mill dam'?

There lived an old lord by the north-ern sea,
Bow down; There lived an old lord by the
north-ern sea, The boughs they bend to me.... There
lived an old lord by the north-ern sea, And
he had daugh-ters one, two, three;
I will be true, true to my love, Love, and my
love will be true to me.

* # 10 in F.J. Child's English and Scottish Popular Ballads

1. There lived an old lord by the northern sea,
   Bow down;
   There lived an old lord by the northern sea,
   The boughs they bend to me.
   There lived an old lord by the northern sea,
   And he had daughters one, two, three;
   I will be true, true to my love,
   Love, and my love will be true to me.

2. A young man came a-courting there,
   Bow down;
   A young man came a-courting there,
   The boughs they bend to me.
   A young man came a-courting there,
   He found the youngest very fair;
   I will be true, true to my love,
   Love, and my love will be true to me.

3. He gave this girl a beaver hat,
   The eldest she thought ill of that.

4. He gave the youngest a gay gold ring,
   But to the eldest not a thing.

5. "Sister, oh sister, let us walk out
   To see the ships go sailing about."

6. As they went a-walking at the sea's brim,
   The eldest shoved the youngest in.

7. "Sister, oh sister, lend me your hand,
   And you shall have my house and land."

8. "I'll give you neither hand nor glove,
   But I will have your own true love."

9. Down she sank and away she swam
   Until she came to the old mill dam.

10. The miller came out with his fish hook,
    And he fished that fair maid out of the brook.

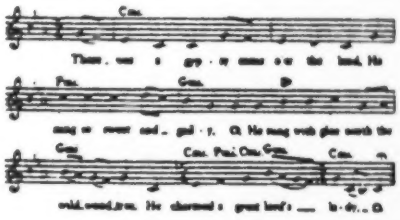
11. He robbed her of her gay gold ring,
    And into the brook he pushed her again.

12. The miller was hanged at his own mill gate,
    The eldest sister she shared his fate.

This sixteenth century Scottish ballad evokes and expresses with simplicity and power an eternal theme: the readiness of a person to sacrifice everything that life offers for the sake of love. Like the other traditional songs reproduced here, The Gypsy Laddie was brought to the New World by British settlers in the 17th century and received a wide dispersion in North America. Texans and other westerners, in particular, have cherished this song. During the 18th and 19th centuries it was congenial to people living in a vast land where men and women were helpless without horses. In the Gypsy Laddie love itself travels on horseback.

The Gypsy Laddie unfolds its human drama in eight swift verses: it makes a comment upon life that cuts to the bone, yet it does so in the simplest of words, almost in monosyllables. There is a moral here, and a model, for young writers and their teachers of English: the simpler your language the clearer is your meaning and the greater the impact of your communication.

Does the song have a place in the elementary school: is it too 'advanced' for small children? Certainly it has a place in the elementary school, perhaps in the kindergarten, even. A tiny child is capable of grasping the depth and the beauty of this song.

In history classes The Gypsy Laddie may be used to spur the investigation of minority groups - in this case the gypsies who have a fascinating history in the western world all of their own.

There was a gypsy came o'er the land
  He sang so sweet and gaily O
He sang with glee 'neath the wild wood tree,
  He charmed a great lord's lady, O

"Go bring me down my high-heeled shoes,
  All made of Spanish leather O;
And I'll put on my lowland breeches,
  To trip it o'er the heather, O."

The lord came home late that night,
  Inquiring for his lady, O;
"She's gone, she's gone," said the old servant man,
  "She's gone with the gypsy Davy, O."

"Go saddle me my best black mare,
  The grey is ne'er so speedy, O;
For I'll ride all night and I'll ride all day,
  Til I overtake my lady, O."

Riding down by the riverside,
  The grass was wet and dewy, O,
Seated with her gypsy lad,
  It's there he spied his lady, O.

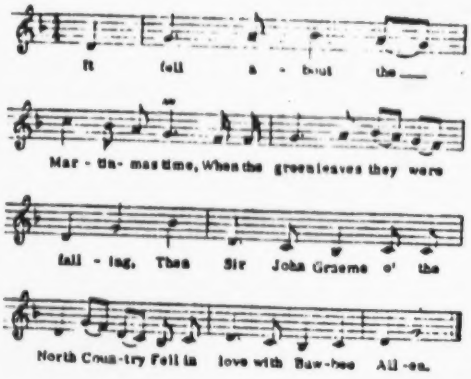
"Will you forsake your house and home,
  Will you forsake your baby, O?
Will you forsake your true wedded love,
  And go with the gypsy Davy O?"

"Yes, I'll forsake my house and home,
  And I'll forsake my baby, O;
And I'll forsake my true wedded love,
  And go with the gypsy Davy, O.

"Last night I lay on a goose-feather bed,
  Sheets turned down so bravely, O;
Tonight I'll sleep in the mud and the rain,
  By the side of the gypsy Davy, O."

Child # 200 (J)

Barbara ("Bawbee") Allen


It fell a - bout the
Mar - tin- mas time, When the green leaves they were
fall - ing, That Sir John Graeme o' the
North Coun-try Fell in love with Baw-bee All -en.

This song has been universally known and universally sung throughout the English-speaking world. Variants both of word and melody exist by the hundreds. We reproduce here one of the less well-known of these. It comes from Scotland, and has been sung and recorded by the great Scots folk singer, Ewan McColl.

In this song Sir John Graeme is presented as a man so passionately in love that he has fought a duel for Bawbee Allen, and has been mortally wounded: in verse 8 we are informed of the 'warrant' of his love -- his blood-soaked shirt, soaked with blood shed for Bawbee Allen. 'Warrant' is here used in the old-fashioned meaning of the word, that is, proof.

Bawbee Allen is cold to Sir John. She hates him because she feels - verse 5 - that he has gone out of his way in public to ignore and slight her. But even while she hates she loves too, deeply and bitterly. She comes down to us over the years as a complicated person trying to cope with conflicting feelings. She is so cold that she turns away from the dying without a word of consolation. Yet her feelings for him are so warm that she does not survive him.

Three of the songs that we reproduce here -- The Golden Vanity, The Two Sisters, Barbara Allen --deal with people or ships that come from "the North Country." North Country meant either northern England, or Scotland. What were, and still are, the unique characteristics of this land that produced so many beautiful songs?

2. He's sent his man all through the town,
To the place where she was dwelling,
"Come down, come down to my master dear,
If your name be Bawbee Allen."

3. O slowly slowly rose she up,
And slowly she went to him;
And when she came to his bedside:
"Young man, I think you're dying."

4. "'Tis I am sick and very sick,
And it's a' for Bawbee Allen."
"It's better for me ye'll never be,
For bonnie Bawbee Allen.

5. "When ye were in the tavern, sir,
And at the wine was swilling,
Ye made the toasts go round and round,
But slighted Bawbee Allen."

6. He's turned his face unto the wall,
And death was with him dealing,
"Then fare ye well my kind friends all,
But be kind to Bawbee Allen.

7. "Then put your hand unto the wall,
And there you'll find a token,
With my gold watch and my gold ring,
Give that to Bawbee Allen.

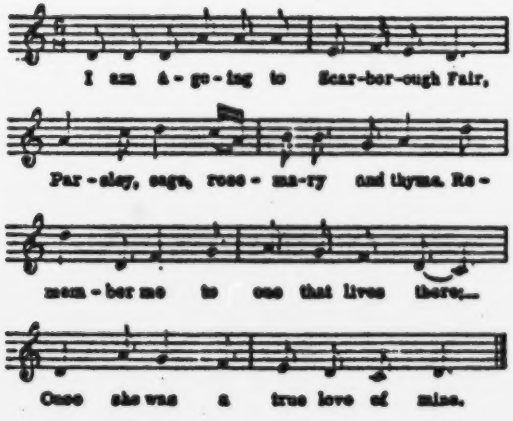
8. "Then put your hand unto my side,
And there you'll find a warrant;
And there you'll get my blood-red shirt,
It bled for Bawbee Allen."

9. She had not gone a step, a step,
When she heard the death bell knelling,
And every clap the death bell gave,
Said "Woe to Bawbee Allen."

10. "O mother dear, you'll make my bed,
You'll make it soft and narrow;
My love has died for me this day,
I'll die for him tomorrow."

Throughout the world people have woven riddles into their popular songs; the Anglo-American tradition is no exception. Some songs pose riddles: what is stronger than death (love)? What runs without an object (water)? What is fruitful without a bloom (fern)? Other songs set up a challenge with the promise of a reward if the riddle is solved, or the threat of a penalty if it is not.

Scarborough Fair, which in Child's Popular Ballads goes under the title of The Elfin Knight, is a riddle song that has been widely sung both here and in the British Isles. The particular version given here has become widely known to modern audiences: arranged and sung by Simon and Garfunkel it was the theme song of the movie The Bridegroom, and also was widely disseminated by records and over the radio. Teachers might ask students to research flower symbolism in songs like this. What is the meaning of the refrain 'parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme'? Land lying 'between the ocean and the sea sand' is called by the geographer polderland: it is soil wrung from the sea often by centuries of continuing struggle between man and the waves. Since the time of Christ the great pioneers of polderland engineering have been the Dutch and the Vietnamese. And this, too, would be a theme for student research.


I am a-go-ing to Scar-bor-ough Fair,
Par-sley, sage, rose-ma-ry and thyme. Re-
mem-ber me to one that lives there;
Once she was a true love of mine.

1. I am a-going to Scarborough Fair,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
Remember me to one who lives there;
Once she was a true love of mine.

2. Tell her to make me a cambric shirt
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
Without a stitch of needlework,
And then she'll be a true love of mine.

3. Tell her to wash it in yonder dry well,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
Where water ne'er sprang nor drop of rain fell,
And then she'll be a true love of mine.

4. Tell her to dry it on yonder hawthorn,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
Which has not seen blossom since Adam was born,
And then she'll be a true love of mine.

5. Now you have asked me questions three,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
I hope you'll answer as many for me,
And then you'll be a true love of mine.

6. You must find me an acre of land,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
Between the ocean and the sea sand,
And then you'll be a true love of mine.

7. You must plow it with one ram's horn,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
And sow it all over with one peppercorn,
And then you'll be a true love of mine.

8. You must reap it with a strap of leather,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
And bind it all up with one peacock feather,
And then you'll be a true love of mine.

9. And when you have done and finished this work,
Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme.
Come to me for your cambric shirt,
And then you'll be a true love of mine.

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Checklist of Materials

Usually, when we go to conventions and workshops, we take as much materials along as possible to distribute to participants. However, we can't carry everything, plus new materials are developed. If you would like to receive anything on this list - possibly you got it once but misplaced it or want another copy - just write us and we will be glad to send it to you. Please enclose a 15¢ stamp to help defray the postage; 30¢ if you're asking for several items. We have the envelopes.

__ A list of Folksong Picture Books for Younger Children (most contain the words and music and can be found in most libraries. (1 page)

__ The Story of America Through Her Ballads & Folk Songs Arranged by Historical, Geographical & Social Eras & Movements (A Bibliography & Discography) A n initial selection of specific songs, books & records of each period. (Send 30¢ postage -it's 24 pages worth)

__ Discography of Ballads & Folksongs with Addresses of Record Companies (As of 6/1/77) 20 pages. Send 30¢. Many records, out of print, are still available in libraries.

__ Folksongs of America: An Annotated Bibliography (12 pages)

__ A Bibliography of Suggested Readings for Teachers for Information in American Social Studies & Folksong (suggests a few good books for Whaling, Erie Canal, Lumbering, Forty-Niners, Cowboy, Farmers, American REvolution, Westward Movement and Frontier, Civil War Era) 3 pages

__ Folksongs & Ballads: Bibliography (Not annotated but arranged by subjects and time periods 12 pages

__ A copy of Laurence Seidman's article in Social Education, November, 1973, "Teaching The American REvolution Through Its Folksongs."

__ A copy of Tony Scott's article in Sing Out, the folksong magazine, "The REvolutionary Period and Folksongs"

__ A Pot Pourri of teaching ideas on the American Cowboy and the West. All grade levels- K-12 by working classroom teachers. (18 pages - art ,music, dramatics, language arts, values, etc.)30¢

$$

Materials from other Sources- Still Free - but write directly to addresses given-

__ Every teacher should send off a request to the Library of Congress for An Inventory of the Bibliographies & Other Reference Aids Prepared by the Archive of Folk Song. This lists 126 articles, bibliographies about folksong, all of which are available free of charge. Most worthwhile!!!

Address: Head Librarian
Archive of Folk Song
Library of Congress
Music Division
Washington, D.C. 20540

FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES - A NEWSLETTER

Volume I # 3 February 1981

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Correspondence With Our Readers

Steve S. Tigner, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Ohio, is also editor of the Journal of Magic History. We want to thank him for designing our new letterhead, and taking time out from his busy schedule to help us with this -- we're sure you'll like it,too!

Steve also asks: "Do you know of folksongs in which magic and magicians figure (I'm thinking mainly of sleight-of-hand tricksters)? Is there enough for an article on, say, The Magician in Folk Songs?"

That's a tough one. Many of our folksongs do indeed deal with magic; but it is the magic of people who cast spells and work charms rather than sleight-of-hand. Sleight-of-hand artists, in days gone by, used their skills to pick pockets; if they got caught they might end up dead. As far as we know such people were not the subject of songs. Do any of our readers know more about this? If so, please communicate directly with Steve. His address is:

Dr. Steven Tigner
Dept. of Philosophy
University of Toledo
Toledo, Ohio 43606

If you have any questions, be sure to send them in, like Steve did. If you have had experiences with folk songs in the classroom, write to us about them. The newsletter will help you share your experiences with the rest of our readers. You will find out that you are not alone and that others are trying out similar ideas.

(c)

Anna Pulhart, RR 1, Uniondale, IN 46791 writes:

"My appreciation for showing how folk songs can be used in the classroom, to teach social studies. Truly it was like a new light on the horizon. Although my use of folk songs because of my meager background has not been extensive, I have used them and the children have enjoyed them. I especially like the meat they add to the bare bones of a history text. I have switched to fourth grade this year and am currently wrapped up in exploring play parties in Indiana. It has been interesting and explains to me the attitudes that my mother had."

Comment

This term I went into a classroom and sang with Fifth Graders who were studying the American Revolution. First I sang "The Old Lady Over the Sea," a song that tells about the Boston Tea Party. After discussion of vocabulary (what does it mean to "steep" tea?) I asked the children to sing the song with me. They loved it -- the song enables them to understand the Tea Party on a human level; and this makes them ready and anxious to learn more.

At 7th or 8th grade level, of course, students could explore the subject in more depth. They might try to find out what happened to the tea in the other ports to which it was sent - New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston.

Then I sang "The British Grenadiers." - a proud march of one of the crack British regiments sent to Boston. All of the men had to be over six feet tall to be accepted -- an impressive height at a time when most men were not more than 5'6" high. We talked about how soldiers were recruited for the army, about impressment, about men's pride in their regiment. The students could feel this pride when they sang the song. Upper grades, again, could explore this more deeply: how these proud men were slaughtered at Bunker Hill, where their size and their bright uniforms provided an easy target for patriot muskets.

In all of this, don't neglect the possibilities for artwork -- scenes of the patriots rowing out to the tea ship, the crowd on the wharves, watching, the tea being scattered and floating in the bay. Murals, paintings, mobiles, dioramas, sculpture, poetry, needlework, all are available for children to express what they feel and think.

As to play parties, these have been found in many states. Play parties were songs that people used to dance to. Folks sang their own accompaniment because musicians weren't available, or because their religion prohibted formal dancing. Tough pioneers who faced the hardships of wilderness life gathered together and sang, clapped and danced the night away. Some of the most popular play parties are known to us today as children's songs -- Little Red Wagon, Mary Wore a Red Dress, Old Joe Clark, Little Brown Jug, and many more.

An excellent source for play parties is Ben Botkin, The American Play Party (New York: Frederic Ungar, 1963). Also consult your librarian about The Journal of American Folklore which has had quite a few articles on play parties over the years. As for dance steps consult the physical education or music teachers who may be helpful. The steps are simple fun, and easy to do.

Arlene Heckler, 42 Woodcock Lane, Levittown, N.Y. 11756, writes:

"Folksongs are a wonderful way to humanize the teaching of history. I used them for a unit on the Industrial Revolution in the 6th grade. This encompassed labor and its meaning in people's lives as well as the struggle for child labor laws, Negro Emancipation, Women's rights and work safety. Still there were so many other aspects, so many other songs! That is the beauty

of this approach. The rapport can be instantaneous. I use my guitar which I play in a very simple fashion, as well as recordings (Seeger, Josh White, Judy Collins, Woody Guthrie). Theguitar is played 'live,' while the others are tap ed for easy access.

It's a worthwhile enterprise and hopefully opens up cracks in the pseudo-sophistication of our jaded students, allowing them to make connection with their feelings, as well."

Comment

Instant rapport is the dynamite of the folksong approach. When children listen and, above all, when they start to sing, it becomes possible for them to identify with the people in the song -- striking workers, Black slaves, lumbermen, sailors, women, soldiers, pioneers, miners.

Through the songs the children make connection "not only with their heritage but with their feelings." In this society with all its alienation we need students who can feel, who have compassion, who trust the truth that is in the heart as well as that which is in the mind.

There are "so many songs," says Arlene. Right! The problem is not shortage of material, but how to select from the rich folksong mine the two or three songs that we need, that both explain the topic, that sound beautiful, that move the students.

Kathy L. Petrush, Rte #2 Box 98E, Harrogate, TENN 37752, writes:

"Had a very successful team-teaching folksong unit with the social studies teacher when I was still at Rome City, Indiana, Middle School three years ago. How time flies! 8th graders -- I believe we did the Revolutionary War, Civil War and "Wild West." I've always wanted to write it up as it was truly worthwhile."

Comment

Yes, do write it up. Teaching is a tough occupation; we are always giving without getting much back in the way of recognition (but if you make mistakes, boy, do you hear about it!). Here is a chance to find out that you are not alone, to receive the recognition and support of others. The light that you send out not only shines for others but illuminates your own teaching for yourself. Don't hold back!

Comment and Response to all these letters

Folksongs help illuminate a subject area, whether Social Studies, English, Science or the Humanities. The songs bring the period alive; stimulate intellectual and emotional curiosity in the students; focus on the time area and the people studied. Until you have tried it, it is hard to believe how really simple it is and how well it works.

The whole story of the night of the Boston Teaparty, as of many historic incidents, is a very dramatic one, full of suspense and excitement. Indeed, if someone had written it up as a TV script, most of us would say that it could never have happened, that it was invented. It's just too dramatic -- the British Navy and armed guards all around, a bright moonlit night, the participants disguised to avoid identification, etc.

And this is not true just for the Revolution, but for all our history! In each historic period people composed and sang songs that told what they were doing and how they felt about it.

As the children sing the songs again and again, they start to ask new questions. Phrases they didn't understand at first now become clearer. Their curiosity is aroused. It's an on-going experience which is felt at different levels. There is much room for individual and group follow-up.

On this page we present three teachers who offer special resources for the teaching of folksong. These range from Latin American songs and songs of the southwest through illustrated songbooks for primary grades.

Jenny Wells Vincent (PO Box 214, San Cristobel, NM 87564) has her own record company and specializes in Spanish American folksongs. She has put out two unique recordings of Spanish language songs of the western hemisphere. She writes:

"I will send later an account of my own experiences with classroom folksongs. Am most interested in this total project, and will send a resume later of my activity in this field. Am enclosing a brief catalogue of my educational records in use in schools nationwide at all levels."

Viki Ann Diamond (536 Livingston St., Westbury, N.Y. 11590. Phone: 516 333 2381) is a professional singer, entertainer, consultant and teacher, who gives concerts and seminars of happenings in folk song and story. She writes:

"My own special concern is for the use of language: ways and styles of music and words which can communicate in an atmosphere of thoughtful and sensitive listening. These are the areas of teaching sorely trampled under in our vociferous audio culture. I am particularly careful to try to use song which combine words with good melody to create an atmosphere in a school setting which is unusual.

"I fully agree with you about Golden Vanity. I do not, however, sing the rhythmical 4-square tune you printed, but one I heard in Cecil Sharpe House and which Gordon Bok sings on the Ways of Man record. It's haunting, gentle, and paves the way for the morality of the question to kids: "If you were the cabin boy, what would you have done?"

Carrion Crow is a good story and I use it additionally to illustrate changes. I sing it four ways usually...the changes in tunes, words and eras really appeal to kids.

Another useful song for infinite variation is Hambone-Froggie Went a-Courting. I'm frequently asked to add song to straight literature study units. Moby Dick was one such, recently. I sang "John Kanaha," "Sam Gone Away," "Greenland Whale Fisheries," "Whiskey-O," and others.

One last thought for our newsletter reaching out to teachers of primary-age children. Much of my work is with very young children and their music, and an important component for the very young is rest time. The realization that rest and play are the work of the young child and that lullabies are essential work songs is a vital one to me."

Dr. Norma J. Livo, who teaches at the University of Colorado in the School of Education (Denver) has sent us a paper that she has written on Folk Song and Literature in which she ties the two together in a most appealing and informative manner. She has also compiled a bibliography of ballad and folk song picture books, nursery rhymes and counting songs, plus a listing of 44 activities which are suggested by these music picture books. Norma has graciously consented to our reprinting her whole article - 16 pages of it. Any elementary teacher would want this, and find it useful. To get it, just send us a 0.15 c. stamp. We'll provide the envelope.

Norma's address is: University of Colorado at Denver, School of Education, 1100 Fourteenth Street, Denver, COLO 80202 . 303-629-2717 (phone)

(c)

Introduction

The vast majority of the people in colonial America led a hardy outdoor life as pioneers, farmers, herders and seafarers; 95% of the at least lived in scattered settlements, illages or very small towns. There were not more than five cities in all the colonies; none of these had a population, by 1776, of more than 25,000.

The settlers brought their songs with them, and the vast majority of such songs came from the British Isles. As time passed they added new verses that told of their own American experiences, and they changed the melodies and the style of singing. In this way a new and unique type of folk music gradually came into being.

It is important today to remind ourselves from the start that Americans have been a singing people. In the days before radio, movies, TV, records and newspapers, in the loneliness of the vast American wilderness and countryside, music was a principal form of recreation and of education. Ballads, indeed, were historical documents of primary significance, through which the history of the people and the news of the day were passed from mouth to mouth. People sang at work, in the fields, on the ships, in the kitchen, in the evenings around the fireside, and while cradling their children. You sang for your own enjoyment, or to communicate with somebody else. The message of the song was the important thing, rather than the quality of the singer's voice.

Music al instruments were scarce and expensive, so most songs were sung without accompaniment. How could you play an instrument anyway, w hen you sang with your two hands on the plough, or were spinning yarn? A precious part of the people's folksong heritage were the wonderful melodies which were handed down from generation to generation along with the songs themselves.

Gradually new songs were composed about stirring events, and set to the old tunes. American music has always been a creative combination of the very old and the very new.

What is the value of these old colonial songs for our students?

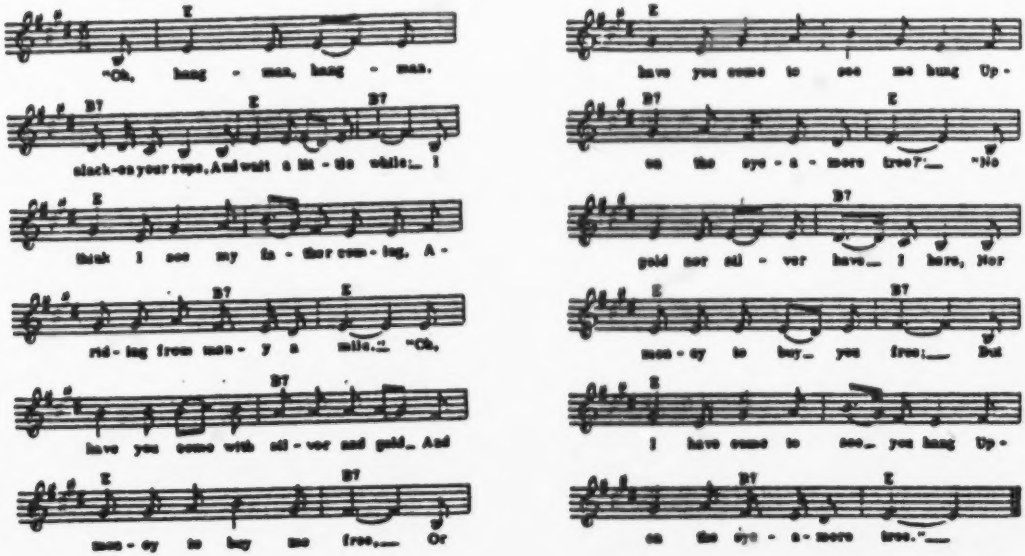
The songs reveal that the colonists had feelings with which our modern students may identify. The songs present the colonists as human beings; they strip away the conventional stereotype of stiff, priggish characters who wear sugar-loaf hats and buckled shoes and only appear upon the flat page of a textbook. The students see them as t ree dimension characters who loved, worked, and ;layed much as we do.

Many of these songs express a special characteristic of British traditional songs, that is, they incorporate dialogue, in which people talk to each other. This readily lends itself to easy reading and dramatization by our students; and in turn this brings the songs more alive in class.

The Sycamore Tree

The Sycamore Tree came to America during the 17th century with the early settlers. Since that time it has become one of the country's best loved and most sung songs. Variants have been collected in every state. Black slaves had their own versions; children everywhere have danced down the centuries singing this song.

The young person who faces hanging is he a "bad" person? Probably not. In the Old World - and the British Isles were no exception - poverty itself was a crime in the 17th century. Since the poor were driven by hunger to steal, ferocious penalties, including death, were decreed as punishment. You could be hanged for stealing little more than a leg of lamb. In some cases the death penalty could be commuted if you paid a fine. In the song the family's refusal to pay this fine does not necessarily mean that they are unwilling, but simply that they are too poor.

Another way to cheat the gallows was to agree to quit the country, travel to the colonies, and serve a six or seven year period of servitude clearing the wilderness and planting crops. The Sycamore Tree which these people brought with them reminded them both of the sadness of the past and of the hope for the future. The children captured this sense of hope when they took the song, speeded up the tempo, and began to skip and dance to it. Elementary teachers may check this out by teaching the song to 3rd or 4th graders and then taking them out into the playground to skip.

"Oh, hang - man, hang - man,
slack-as your rope, And wait a lit - tle while;_ I
think I see my fa - ther com - ing, A -
rid - ing from man - y a mile._ "Oh,
have you come with sil - ver and gold_ And
man - ey to buy me free,_ Or
have you come to see me hung Up -
on the sye - a - more tree?_ "No
gold nor sil - ver have_ I here, Nor
man - ey to buy_ you free;_ But
I have come to see_ you hung Up -
on the sye - a - more tree."_

Repeat with mother, brother, sister, and finally lover, who replies:

"Yes gold and silver have I here,
And money to buy you free;
But I've not come to see you hang
Nor hung you shall not be."

The Old Man Who Lived in the Woods

The story of man and wife who competed to see which was the better worker comes from the Old World; but evidently it was a favorite with the colonists, for variants of the song have been collected in every region of the country. During the colonial period many pioneers lived on farms that were pretty much self-sufficient. This meant that in daily life men and women lived essentially upon a footing of equality. Where the family had to do everything for itself the woman's work was different from the man's, but it was just as important as his and, indeed, indispensable to the family's survival. The song, too, helps children understand how in time of war, when the men went off, many women shouldered the entire burden of running the farm. Abundant testimony from other sources assures us that colonial women were often every bit as good as men in driving the plough and wielding the ax. Add to woman's daily labor the work of bearing, birthing and raising children; and you will be able to convince young people today how formidable was woman's contribution to the founding of the American Republic during the colonial period.

At the elementary level the song fits in neatly with activities that help familiarize children with fundamental life processes -- the planting of seed, the growing of corn, the production of eggs and the mating of animals; also with the milking of cows, the spinning of thread, the winding of yarn and the weaving of cloth. As the children become familiar with these activities the latter can, in the most literal sense be used to transport the students through the song back to the experience of people in colonial times.

The song like so many in the folk heritage, presents almost no vocabulary difficulties, even for very young children. In this case we need perhaps to discuss: 'yonder,' 'speckled,' 'kick on the shins,' 'mire,' ' astray.' Note how glad the woman is to do her husband's work ("With all my heart!" the old woman said."); what knowledge does she, as woman, have, that makes her so eager for the exchange?

In 1778 a Philadelphian noted in his diary: "My wife did the baking and the cooking; made twenty cheeses from one cow; was gardener and apple butter maker; kept the house clean, cut and dried apples; made cider without tools for the constant drink of the family; attended to the washing and ironing; sewed and knit for us all...I think she hath not been four times since her residence here, to visit the neighbors. When one is sick, she is a faithful nurse, night and day. She rose at daybreak, at her age and went to the wharves to buy wood. The herbs would have died if she had not skirmished for hay for him.Beyond all this she suffers and instructs Poll, our pestiferous hired girl." *

* Alan Lomax, Folk Songs of North America, pp. 20-21

(c)

The theme of The Old Man in the Woods is an ancient subject and there are ballads about this dating back to the early 1500's. The American version is of Scottish origin. John Grualis.

If you would like to read a similar theme in an African folktale, you'll find it in the book Lion Outwitted by Hare and Other African Tales. byPhyllis Savory (Albert Whitman Co., 1971). The title of the story is "When the Husband Stayed at Home," only here, the lazy husband ends up accidentally hanging himself. Folksong themes transcend cultural barriers.

I found another version in a children's book of nursery rhymes "Four and Twenty Blackbirds," by Helen Dean Fish, beautifully illustrated by Robert Lawson, and published in 1936. Here it is presented under the title Joe Dobson who according to the rhyme was an Englishman living in the days of Robin Hood.

Suggested activities suitable for various grades:

* Have the children make a list of their parent's daily activities at work. Many children have only the vaguest idea of what mother and father actually do on the job

** Compare the tasks of the colonial housewife with those of today's housework

*** Make a list of the machines that now do much of what was formerly done by hand in the house (be sure to include the source of heat for cooking lighting and warmth)

**** What duties were children responsible for in colonial days; what are those of the modern child?

***** Have children interview grandparents, and find out what their daily lives were like

****** Why was it important to milk the cow; to watch the 'speckled hen'; to wind the yarn? What is a 'furrow,' and how long is it? How does a farmer plough land these days?

******* Have children wind some yarn, do some weaving; go to a farm and watch how cows are milked, chickens raised, eggs collected.

One of our students, Ida Jean Schroy (Ballad of America course, C.W. Post College) has written a parody of The Old Man in the Woods entitled The Young Man in the Town. Here it is:

There was a young man who lived in the town.
As you shall surely see.
Who said he could do more work in a day
Than his wife could do in three.
"You may be right," his pretty wife said.
"But then you must allow,
That you must do my work for a day
And I'll in your office stay.

"You must take John to the ball game.
And Mary to the Girl Scouts.
And you must go to the teacher at three
With Kay Lee and her doubts.
The dishes to do, the beds to make
The washing and bake a cake.
The dinner will be hot, of course,
And never will be late."

The young woman took the bus to the train.
To his office she did go.
The young man looked about him and said
"Oh, where do I begin?"
John bit the dentist. Mary was late.
Joe howled at the doctor. "STOP!"
The dishwasher broke and flooded the floor
And the big cake was a flop.

Her chores are hopeless, how can I live
To do all those things in a day?
Then the young man decided that he would be
Better off far, far away.
And when he saw how smoothly she ran
His office with all its chores;
He swore she could do more work in a day
Than he could do in four.

Short Bibliography for Colonial Days

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Linscott, Eloise Hubbard, Folk Songs of Old New England. London: Archos Books 1962
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Folksong Sessions - New Orleans and New York City

On November 24, 1980, a session of Folksong In The Classroom drew 40 participants at the annual meeting of the NCSS in New Orleans. Songs were presented and ideas exchanged. We, as presenters, left the session with new friends, new enthusiasm and a renewed conviction of the importance of folksongs in our classrooms.

A similar session was held at the annual meeting of the Association of Teachers of Social Studies (N.Y.State) 1/31/81 at the Hilton in N.Y.C.

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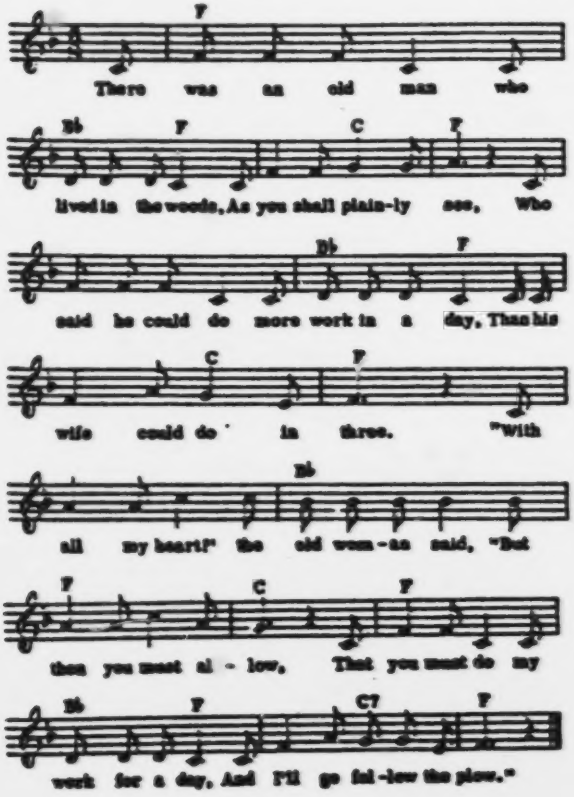

F
There was an old man who
B♭ F C F
lived in the woods, As you shall plain-ly see, Who
B♭ F
said he could do more work in a day, Than his
C F
wife could do in three. "With
B♭
all my heart!" the old wom-an said, "But
F C F
then you must al - low, That you must do my
B♭ F C7 F
work for a day, And I'll go fol-low the plow."

"You must milk the tiny cow,
Lest she should go quite dry,
And you must feed the little pigs
That live in yonder sty.

"You must watch the speckled hen,
For fear she lays astray,
And not forget the spool of yarn
That I spin every day."

The old woman took the staff in her hand,
And went to follow the plow;
And the old man took the pail on his head
And went to milk the cow.

But Tiny she winked and Tiny she blinked,
And Tiny she tossed her nose,
And Tiny she gave him a kick on the shins
Till the blood ran down to his toes.

Then "Whoa, Tiny!" and "So, Tiny!
My pretty little cow, stand still!
If ever I milk you again," he said,
"It will be against my will."

And then he went to feed the pigs
That lived within the sty;
The old sow ran against his legs
And threw him in the mire.

And then he watched the speckled hen
Lest she might lay astray;
But he quite forgot the spool of yarn
That his wife spun every day.

Then the old man swore by the sun and the moon,
And the green leaves on the trees,
That his wife could do more work in a day
Than he could do in three.

And when he saw how well she plowed,
And ran the furrows even,
He swore she could do more work in a day
Than he could do in seven.

(C)

Let's Go a-Huntin'

As old as the country itself, this charming song has followed the frontier all the way to Texas -wherever little boys have gone out into the woods to play or hunt. It ranks as one of the all-time children's favorites, especially for children in the elementary grades. In the Old World the song was called "The Cutty Wren." As a peasant song it dates back to a period several hundred years before the founding of the colonies.

In singing this song with Black children in Washington D.C. several years ago we found that it was wise to substitute 'rabbit' for 'rat' as the animal hunted. Hunting for rats in the D.C. ghetto is something, evidently that both children and adults do every day of the week: such a hunt is the symbol of poverty, and definitely not a topic for a light-hearted song.

Note the repetition, over and over, of the same basic question "What/how shall we....?" with the addition of just two new words to each verse: kill-gun; haul-cart; divide-knife; cokk-fire, etc. This makes it a tremendous learning activity for slow readers. Teach the kids the song, then put the song sheet in front of them. Word recognition will come easily because what they are now reading on paper they have already learned by ear. The song and the easy word recognition that it promotes will give the students a sense of confidence in themselves; this will make it that much easier for them to move ahead.

So many folk songs make first-class reading material! One reason is that they often use only the simplest and most basic words, and yet manage to say things and tell stories that are fascinating for young people. Let's go a-Huntin' is a good example of this. In all of its eight verses it contains only 7 words of more than one syllable: huntin', borrow, divide, over, shoulder, gotta, and bellyache. Again the song will be most effective with upper graders who have been exposed to cooking activities in class, at campfires or cookouts.

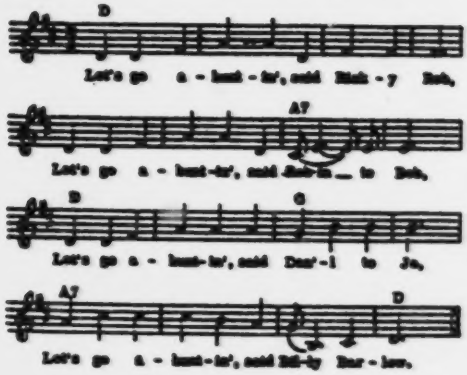
News of our grant

Our grant proposal, Teaching the Humanities through Folk Songs, was completed and sent in to the National Endowment for the Humanities last November. We will have news of acceptance or rejection next March and will keep you informed. We do have a five-page overview of the grant proposal, which we would be glad to send out to anyone requesting it. If you think your district, city, parish or state would be interested in our training workshops for teachers and supervisors, you might want to read about the grant and show it to your superintendent or administrator. It is for all grade levels and all subject areas.

Let's Go a-Huntin'

LeT's Go a- HunTin'

This song is as old as the country and followed the frontier all the way to Texas, wherever little boys went out in the woods to hunt. The charming melody of the version given here was recorded by John A. Lomax in Fort Spunky, Texas.


D
Let's go a - hunt - in', said Rich - y Rob,
A7
Let's go a - hunt - in', said Rob - in to Bob,
D
G
Let's go a - hunt - in', said Dun' - l to Jo,
A7
D
Let's go a - hunt - in', said Bil - ly Bur - low,

2. What shall we hunt for? said Risky Rob,
What shall we hunt for? said Robin to Bob,
What shall we hunt for? said Dun'l to Jo,
Let's hunt for a rat, said Billy Burlow.

3. How shall we kill him? said Risky Rob,
How shall we kill him? said Robin to Bob,
How shall we kill him? said Dun'l to Jo,
Borrow a gun, said Billy Burlow.

4. How shall we haul him? said Risky Rob,
How shall we haul him? said Robin to Bob,
How shall we haul him? said Dun'l to Jo,
Borrow a cart, said Billy Burlow.

5. How shall we divide him? said Risky Rob,
How shall we divide him? said Robin to Bob,
How shall we divide him? said Dun'l to Jo,
Borrow a knife, said Billy Burlow.

6. How shall we cook him? said Risky Rob,
How shall we cook him? said Robin to Bob,
How shall we cook him? said Dun'l to Jo,
Over a fire, said Billy Burlow.

7. I'll roast shoulder, said Risky Rob,
I'll boil legs, said Robin to Bob,
I'll bake back, said Dun'l to Jo,
Tail bone raw, said Billy Burlow.

8. I feel sick, said Risky Rob,
I gotta bellyache, said Robin to Bob,
OOOOOOps!! said Dun'l to Jo,
I feel flea, said Billy Burlow.

(C)

Collected, adapted and arranged by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax.
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A Paper of Pins

A Paper of Pins is one of the most charming of many delightful courting songs (in our view) which the colonial period has left to us. The song cannot be categorized as appropriate for any particular grade; it has a universal appeal and is appropriate for people to sing at any age from the cradle (well, almost) to the grave. At the elementary level you can teach the song by dividing up the boys and girls, and having them sing the dialog back and forth to each other. Or boys and girls may pair off with each pair assuming responsibility for a single verse. This procedure will work even if the group is large: simply have the children decide what extra "gifts" they would like the boy to offer the girl. In this way, with an inventive class, the song can go on for ever, practically, or until everybody is out of breath.

Paper of Pins provides an opportunity to stimulate the children's imaginations with the help of art. Have them draw and paint the lovely dresses red, blue, green, and gold, the coach and four, the silver coins with which the man is tempting the lady. Encourage the boys to see these beautiful things in their mind's eye as they sing about them; ask the girls to imagine that they are themselves dressed in these gorgeous garments.

Paper of Pins, at the elementary level, is a song where the vocabulary problems are minimal: paper of pins, tassel, gown, coach and four, request. The line "that you may have money at your request" is quite a mouthful, but if the boys sing it slowly at first they will soon be able, with a little practice, to speed it up to a normal tempo.

— In colonial days young people were seldom left alone - many people lived in cabins with just one room, so there really was not much privacy for anybody. When a young man came calling he had to do his courting in public, under supervision. Answer-back songs became popular: the boy sang one verse, and the girl answered back with another.

Paper of Pins has been traced back to England, where it was known as The Keys of Canterbury : in that song the young man wins his lady because he promises her the "Keys to his heart," and she accepts. In the colonial version, it is only when he promises her the keys to his chest that she accepts and he then scornfully rejects her.

Why does he offer her "a paper of pins?" In the 16h and 17th centuries a pin was a rare and valuable thing, made by hand and also scarce. Pins were, indeed, once so valuable that when a woman married she was given "pin money." In France the people were taxed to provide the Queen with pins for her boudoir. Pins as they are now known were first made in France about the 14th century. In 1775 the Continental Congress offered a prize for the first twenty-five dozen pins equal in quality to those imported from England.

A Paper of Pins

He:
"I'll give to you a paper of pins
And that's the way our love begins
If you will marry, marry me,
If you will marry me."
She:
"I'll not accept your paper of pins
If that's the way our love begins
And I'll not marry, marry you,
And I'll not marry you."

He:
"I'll give to you a dress of red
Stitched all around with golden thread,
If you will marry, marry me,
If you will marry me."

She
"I'll not accept your dress of red
Stitched all around with golden thread
And I'll not marry, marry you
And I'll not marry you."
He:
"I'll give to you a dress of green,
That you may be as any queen,
If you will marry, marry me,
If you will marry me."

She:
"I'll not accept your dress of green
That I may be as any queen
And I'll not marry, marry you,
And I'll not marry you."

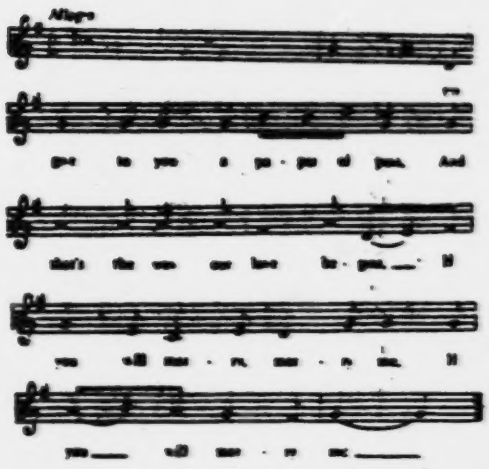
He:
"I'll give to you a blue silk gown
With golden tassels Hanging down,
If you will marry, marry me,
If you will marry me."

She:
"I'll not accept your blue silk gown
With golden tassels hanging down,
And I'll not marry marry you,
And I'll not marry you."

He:
"I'll give to you a coach and four
That you may visit from door to door,
If you will marry, marry me,
If you will marry me."

She:
"I'll not accept your coach and four
That I may visit from door to door,
And I'll not marry, marry you,
And I'll not marry you."

(C)

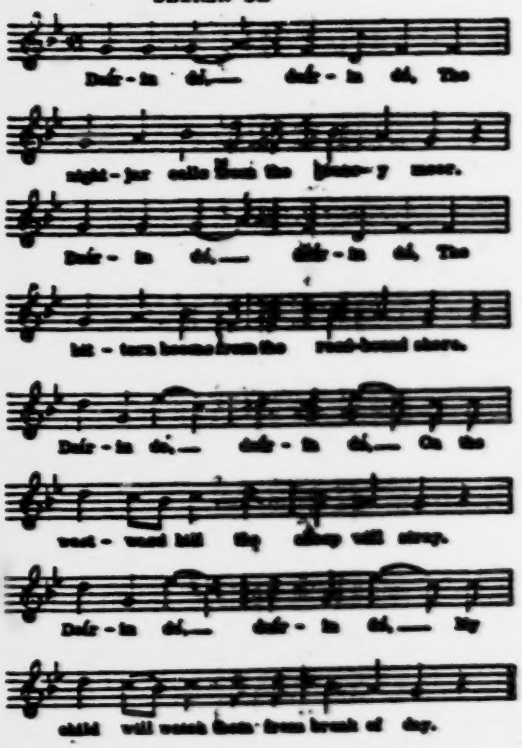
A Paper of Pins

He:
"I'll give to you the keys to my chest
That you may have money at your request
If you will marry, marry me,
If you will marry me."

She:
"I will accept the keys to your chest
That I may have money at my request,
And I will marry, marry you,
And I will marry you."

He:
"Sugar and spice and coffee and tea
You love my money but you dont love me,
And I'll not marry, marry you,
And I'll not marry you."

The one time value of the pin is the most likely explanation of the old superstition:

See a pin and pick it up,
All the day you'll have good luck;
See a pin and let it lay,
Bad luck you'll have all the day.

DEIRIN DE

Deir - in dé, — deir - in dé, The
night - jar calls from the grass - y moor.
Deir - in dé, — deir - in dé, The
bit - tern booms from the reed - bound shore.
Deir - in dé, — deir - in dé, — On the
west - ward hill the sheep will stray.
Deir - in dé, — deir - in dé, — My
child will watch them from break of day.

Deirin dé, deirin dé,
The nightjar calls from the grassy moor.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
The bittern booms from the reed-bound shore.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
On the westward hill the sheep will stray.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
My child will watch them from break of day.

Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Starry pinking shall be his play.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Sheep move, my darling, 'til break of day.

Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Til's gabhdán álainn cumh sun bláthamh.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Til's buaile dílinn d'bláthán sun bláthán.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Caithfh sé [illegible]
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Is roghnaith sé bláthán d'bhuaghlán sa lá.

Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Leanfaid sun bláthán a gcéim sunta.
Deirin dé, deirin dé,
Ach sunbáfaigh sé [illegible]

(C)

Viki Diamond's statement that "lullabies are essential work songs" is very illuminating and true. Here is a lullaby that came to this country with Irish immigrants in the 18th century. It will be new to most readers, but it is so beautiful that it is worth the effort to learn. I have sung it with children for years. It is very short - only 12 lines in fact. But it is one of those mysterious songs that you can sing over and over and never tire of it. It takes you into a world of moor and mist where birds wheel and call, and sheep graze; and as you enter this world, you begin to share the peace of the child that sleeps there.

Deirin De provides opportunity for art and illustration. A child can paint a reed-bound shore, or look for pictures of the nighthawk (nightjar) and bittern (heron). Older students may be encouraged to learn more about the lifestyle of sheep-herders. What skills are needed to raise sheep? What are the hazards and difficulties of this pursuit (disease, losses from straying, wild animals, the constant attention needed in the birthing season). Which are the chief sheep raising countries in the world, and why?

Deirin De is lovely sung in English, but in Gaelic it is magic. Some teachers may be lucky to locate people in the community who speak Irish and who might be glad to teach the children the Gaelic words and pronunciation.

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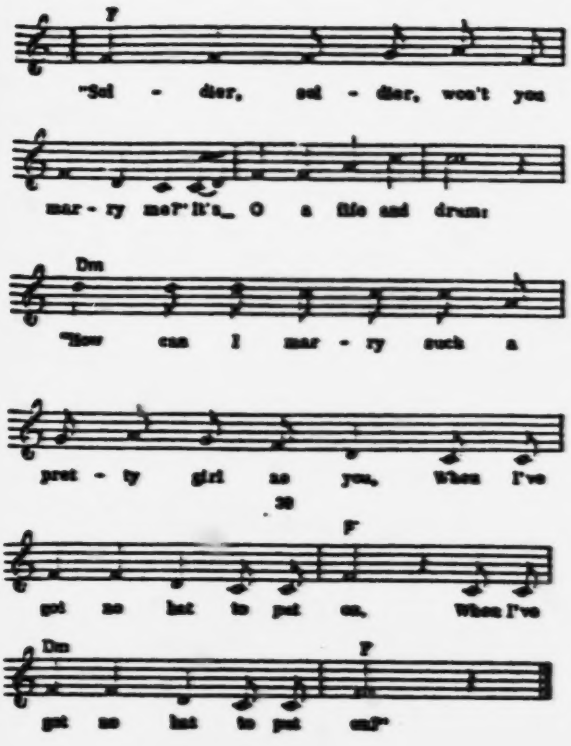
Share your copy of Folksong In The Classroom with your colleagues, your music teacher, your chairpersons of Social Studies, English, the Humanities. If they're interested, send us their names and addresses and we'll be glad to add them to our mailing list. (Room on last page)

Spread the GOOD WORD about the joy and power of folk song and our Newsletter!!!

F
"Sol - dier, sol - dier, won't you
mar - ry me?" It's O a fife and drum:
Dm
"How can I mar - ry such a
pret - ty girl as you, When I've
got no hat to put on, When I've
got no hat to put on?"

Soldier, Soldier Will You Marry Me?

Off to the tailor she did go,
As hard as she could run,
Brought him back the finest that was there,
"Now soldier, put it on."

"Soldier, soldier, won't you marry me?"
It's O a fife and drum:
"How can I marry such a pretty girl as you
When I've got no coat to put on?"

Off to the tailor she did go,
As hard as she could run,
Brought him back the finest that was there,
"Now soldier, put it on."

"Soldier, soldier, won't you marry me?"
It's O a fife and drum:
"How can I marry such a pretty girl as you
When I've got no shoes to put on?"

Off to the shoe shop she did go,
As hard as she could run,
Brought him back the finest that was there,
"Now soldier, put them on."

"Soldier, soldier, won't you marry me?"
It's O a fife and drum:
"How can I marry such a pretty girl as you
With a wife and two babies at home?"

The colonial people had no professional or standing armies of the type that we are familiar with today. In an emergency - a French attack or an Indian raid - the men of the community went to their cabins, picked up their guns, gathered on the village green, and were marched off to battle by their captain, whom they had themselves elected for the job. Militia service of this type was obligatory for able-bodied males, but there were exemptions for conscientious objectors. Militiamen could not be ordered to serve beyond the limits of the colony of which they were citizens. The militia, in other words, was conceived of as essentially a defensive force.

Militiamen were expected to outfit themselves with clothes, guns, and boots. They had the reputation of being a down-at-heel thieving lot, and this is admirably expressed in Soldier, Soldier. Discussion of the colonial militia helps lay a basis for the study of the Revolution. In 1776-81 the militia played an indispensable and, as some think decisive, role in bringing about the defeat of the world's greatest empire.

Like Paper of Pins, Soldier Soldier is fun not only to sing but to act out. The song can go on as long as you want to sing it if you have a heart and don't mind providing the militiaman with stockings, shirt, and underwear in addition to hat coat and shoes.

(C)

The Fox Went Out On A Chilly Night

For the colonists their livestock was of utmost importance to them. They tried to protect it as well as possible against sickness, cold and loss to wild animals. It was not easy to replace chickens, geese or ducks. They were used as a source of income through barter; for food; and the down of geese and ducks was utilized for mattresses, pillows and comforters; their fat was used for cooking.

One might cheer for the fox though over the needs of the farmer in this song. Obviously, the fox and other wild creatures had prior rights to the woods. They, too, must have their food. But then, along came the farmer cutting down the trees to clear the land for plowing. The smaller, wild denizens of the woods that the fox would normally prey on are no longer there, their homes having been destroyed.

Thus the fox turns to another source for food for his growing family - the tamed creatures that the farmer has brought in to his barnyard. It was a battle for survival on the part of the fox, no matter how the farmer might look at it. Wherever civilization has intruded, wild things have been driven out. We see it especially today, where the jungles, forests and primitive undisturbed areas are being gobbled up by the introduction of roads as man moves into these areas and exploits them for their minerals and natural resources.

The preserves that were once the homes of lions, elephants, wild birds are all shrinking. It is happening in South America, in Africa and in our own suburbs where housing projects and roads are replacing the farm land and the marshes and wet lands so necessary to the breeding of wild life and plants.

Part of this is necessary or is it? Man must have room to live. Yet, perhaps he might be less rapacious in the way he destroys the natural environment. When a species disappears, man, too, becomes poorer. Students could discuss this - the drive of poor nations to exploit their resources so that they, too, can become industrialized. Should we and they be more concerned with wild life or with humans? Can both coexist? What about the "chain of life"? Is man to dominate or is he merely one part of the chain, which if broken at any link endangers us all? Can the elimination of jungles and forests; the spreading of deserts; the erosion of farmlands and grazing lands, affect the climate, change the environment, peril man no less than the other animals?

The Fox Went Out can be approached on different grade levels. On one level it is merely an amusing song, a fun song, about a bold fox who raids a farmer's pen to feed his family and outwits the farmer and his wife. On another level, it is a song about ecology, the needs of wild creatures as opposed to those of man. On yet another level, its leads into a study of the fox. What kind of a family life do they have? Are they good parents? Are they harmful to man? A visit to a zoo or a museum can follow.

There are several good books on an upper grade and junior high level that students might enjoy reading. "Julie of the Wolves" and "Coyote In Manhattan" both by Jean Craighead George - tell interesting fiction stories about these cousins of the fox. "The Fox in the Ballpark" by Harold S. Longman is a real winner. It's a story about a wild fox who hides for the winter in the deserted Yankee Stadium in New York City.

For lower grade students, 2nd to 4th grades; A Fox Story" by Alan Sollers, is a lovely, sensitive tale about some boys who hide and watch a fox hunt and see the fox outwit the hounds. Another great story for all grade levels and one that fairly demands to be read aloud to a class is Shel Silverstein's "Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back." Lafcadio, a young lion in Africa, decides that he will not run away when the hunters come. In fact, instead of getting shot, he eats up the hunter, takes his gun and starts practicing shooting. He becomes an

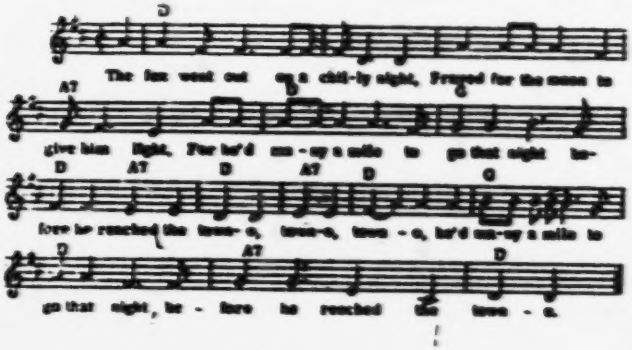
excellent hunter of hunters. A humorous, refreshing and thoughtful book.

And for primary gardes, The Fox Went Out On A Chilly Night has been delightfully done in a magnificent picture book by Peter Spier. It also contains the words and music. It's in paperback by Doubleday.

Tales of the sly fox with almost human characteristics, as in this song, have been in popular tradition for centuries. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales" in the 14th century, has a story of a fox robbing a barnyard and the theme is found in 17th and 18th century children's nursery rhymes and songs. Versions of this song have been traced back to the British Isles and undoubtedly was brought over to this country by the early settlers, who used it as a lullaby also.

The Fox

Melody is from Pete Seeger, America's Favorite Ballads, p. 80.


D
The fox went out on a chil-ly night, Prayed for the moon to
A7 D G
give him light, For he'd ma-ny a mile to go that night be-
D A7 D A7 D G
fore he reached the town- o, town-o, town - o, he'd ma-ny a mile to
D A7 D
go that night, be - fore he reached the town - o.

He ran till he came to a great big pen,
Where the geese and the ducks were kept therein,
"A couple of you will grease my chin,
before I leave this town-o, town-o,
town-o"
A couple of you will grease my chin,
before I leave this town-o."

He grabbed the gray goose by the neck,
Throwed a duck across his back.

He didn't mind their quack, quack, quack
Or their legs all dangling down-o.

Then Old Mother Flipper Flopper jumped out of bed,
Out of the window she cocked her head,
Crying, "John, John, the gray goose is gone
And the fox is on the town-o."

Then John he ran to the top of the hill,
Blowed his horn both loud and shrill.
The fox he said, "I better flee with my kill,
Or they'll soon be on my trail-o."

He ran till he came to his cozy den,
There were the little ones, eight, nine, ten,
They said, "Daddy, better go back again,
For it must be a mighty fine town-o."

Then the fox and his wife without any strife,
Cut up the goose with a fork and knife.
They never had such a supper in their life,
And the little ones chewed on the bones-o.

Vocabulary:
"great big pen"
"will grease my chin"
"Fox is on the town-o"
"legs all dangling down-o"
"she's cocked her head"
"Flee"
"cozy den"
"without any strife"

Questions:
Why did the fox go to town?
Why did the farmer blow his horn
Is the fox cruel when he eats the duck and goose?
Are we cruel when we eat animals
Why did the little foxes want their father to go back to the town?

You might get into the idea that some people will not eat other animals -vegetarianism, etc.

Why did the foxes chew on the bones-o?

Many versions of Mother Flipper-Flopper's name -It has appeared as Old Mother Widdle Waddle, "Snipper Snapper, Slipper Slopper. Obviously the folk have had their fun changing her name as it suits them.

FATHER ABBY'S WILL

This song is interesting for the many old fashioned articles mentioned. The fact that it was the custom in those days to list all belongings in a person's will shows us how scarce manufactured goods and tools were. Many items were brought over from Europe at great expense and thus were of value to our pioneer forefathers who wasted nothing. Things had to last,because it was often impossible to replace them. What a contrast to our throw-away society. We are encouraged to use things once and then dispose of it - razor blades, paper products, pens, lighters, etc..

In colonial days, most farmers and settlers could make things out of wood which was plentiful, but metal objects were scarce and precious. It might be useful to talk about the origin of the word "Manufactured" . Today, we put a premium on things that are handmade. We expect them to be better made, to last longer, to be more original than manufactured goods. And, as a mark of the times, to be more expensive. In colonial days almost everything was handmade and it was the manufactured items brought over from England and the continent, that were scarce and expensive.

Our students might try the following activities:
Make a list of the items in their home that are handmade; which of these were made outside of their homes? Compare it to a list of all the items made by machine. Students might go to see a crafts demonstration to see how something is made by hand-they might try weaving or spinning thread. Ask an artist to come in and show how they do their craft. Take a visit to a factory or have a factory owner or mechanic visit class and describe how machines do the job.

In upper grades this could lead to research onmechanization; did machines take away jobs? Did they create new needs? Did they cause workers to learn new skills? Children could cook or bake something from scratch.Learn how even their kitchens and homes are mechanized. There are lots of possibilities.

What things in your home are heirlooms, handed down from generation to generation? What beautiful things do your parents, grandparents have that they treasure? How many of them are handmade?

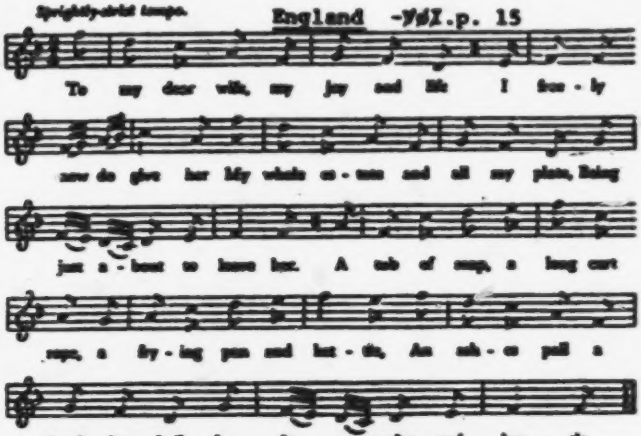
Can set up a colonial dollhouse, make furniture. Talk about colonial crafts. The marvelous books by Leonard Everett Fischer are a must- eh has one on almost every colonial craftsman Edwin Tunis's books are a delight. And there are other fine books-all availab le in libraries. Make a list of disposable products in use in your house, in school - from paper plates to Tv dinners; fast food chains and their packaging. Talk about recycling- there are books of arts and crafts that use materials that are "throw-outs."

Talk about wills. Let students make their wills. What would you leave to your heirs? Are only things valuable? What is important or valuable that you can't pass on in your wills? (Love, feeling needed, sense of humor,etc.).

Vocabulary:
beetle- a sledge hammer with a wooden head so iron wedge would last longer
calabash- a gourd used as household utensil
pot of grease - the washing of the wool after shearing removed the natural oils; it was necessary to restore the grease for spinning
borage - a herb once used as a salad
samp-a meal made from maize, usually boiled and eaten with milk
pigs just starved - just weaned

See what other words you can find definitions for.
More definitions:
fat was valuable-used for soap,candles
looking glasses and mirrors and books were rare and highly valued
a bushel full- utensils were valuable
flitch of bacon - a side of bacon
clister pipe and bladder- some kind of

FATHER ABBY'S WILL

Tune from Helen H.Flanders Ballads Migrant In New England -VOL.p. 15

To my dear wife, my joy and life I bow - by
now do give her My whole es - tate and all my plate, Being
just a - bout to leave her. A tub of soap, a long cart
rope, a fly - ing pan and lat - tle, An ash - es pail a
drink - ing pail An i - ron wedge and bur - dle.

Two painted chairs, 9 worden pairs, a large, old dripping platter,
This bed of hay on which I lay, an old sauce pan for batter.
A little mug, a tin quart jug, a bottle full of brandy,
A looking glass, to see your face, you'll find it very handy.

A musket true as ever flew,
A pound of shot and wallet,
A leather sash, my calabash,
My powder horn and bullets.
An old sword blade, a garden spade,
A hoe, a rake and ladder,
A wooden can, a close stool pan,
A clister pipe and bladder.

A greasy hat, my old tom cat,
A yard and half of linen,
A pot of grease, all woolen fleece
In order for your spinning,
A small tooth comb, an ashen broom,
A candle stick and hatchet,
A coverlet striped down with red,
A bag of rags to patch it.

A ragged mat, a tub of fat,
A book put out by Bunyan,
Another book by Robin Cook,
A skein or two of spun yarn.
An old black muff, some garden stuff
A quantity of borage,
Some devil's weed and burdock seed
To season well your porridge.

A chafing dish with one salt fish,
If I am not mistaken,
A leg of pork, a broken fork,
And half a fitch of bacon.
A spinning wheel, one peck of meal,
A knife without a handle,
A rusty lamp, two quarts of samp,
And half a tallow candle.

My pouch and pipe, two oxen's tripe,
An oaken dish well carved,
My little dog and spotted hog,
With two pigs just starved.
This is my store, I have no more
I heartily do give it,
My years are spun, my days are done,
And so I think to leave it. .

****

This song was first published in 1731 and was supposedly written by a young Harvard graduate, who later became a minister. In real life, FAther Abby was Matthew Abby, a sweeper and bedmaker at Harvard College.

From the notes on the record cover of Bill Bonyon's Yankee Legend.

Additional notes on song:

There were some feather beds, but most mattresses were stuffed with hay or straw

Close stool pan - a chamber utensil enclosed in a stool or box
devil's weed - any of various European hawkweeds, locally troublesome in New England
iron wedge - used for splitting wood, was a prized possession
burdock seed - a type of plant with coarse, burlike flower heads

****

Colonial Folk Song Record Available

A classical 12 inch record of folk songs from the Colonial period is available from Bill Bonyon
RFD 2 Wiscasset, Maine 04578

Entitled "Yankee Legend" it comes with notes. Approximately $6.

(c)

Checklist of Free Materials

We have loads of helpful, informative and useful materials we'd like to share with you. If you would like to receive anything listed on this page, just check it off and mail it in to:

Laurie Seidman 140 Hill Park Avenue Great Neck, N.Y. 11021

Please enclose a 15¢ stamp to help pay postage - we have the envelopes. Send 30¢ to 45¢ in stamps if you're asking for several items or if the article is more than 10 pages. Fair enough?

Besides the materials listed below, all of the items listed in issue #2 are still available.

__ A copy of Norma Livo's article on Folk Song and Literature - a must for any teacher. 20 pages (30¢)

__ Bibliography of Song Books of Other Lands. 2 pages

__ Article by Laurie Seidman on Folk Songs and Social Studies presented at the National Humanities FAculty Leadership Session. 7 pages

__ A list of suggested follow-up activities to folk songs, compiled by working teachers. 6 pages

__ Copies of Lesson Plans by working teachers on different grade levels on Colonial Songs. (from my course, Ballad in America. You may find useful ideas here which you can use as is or modify for your grade level. 15¢

__ Copies of Lesson Plans by working teachers on different grade levels on the British Ballads (presented in issue # 2) 30¢

__ Overview of our Grant Proposal sent in to the National Endowment for the Humanities. 5 pages

&&&

FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES - A NEWSLETTER

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Volume I # 4 May 1981

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$$$$$$ MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND $$$$$$

To those of you who have sent in your $1.50 or more -- THANKS!!

To those of you who haven't, but have been meaning to -- take a moment and do it RIGHT NOW! Send us a check for $1.50 or more, or put two $1 bills, or more, in an envelope and mail it off to Laurie Seidman (address above -- make check out to him, please). While we are glad to mail the newsletter out to anyone requesting it and shall continue to do so, we are requesting a minimum contribution of $1.50 - 37½¢ an issue.

This is not a money-making enterprise. It is truly a labor of love. However, the reality is that Tony and I are paying costs out of our own pocket. Any tangible support will be appreciated. Our expenses consist of frequent phone calls, meeting together four or five times to plan each issue. I live on Long Island, Tony in the Bronx - 22 miles plus $1.00 in tolls each way. And then there are mimeograph costs of paper, xeroxing and postage - and colas!

Your $1.50 also says, "Thank you. I think you two are doing a good job." As teachers we all need to hear that -- and we are no exceptions. If each person would just send us $1.50, we'd be in good shape - not rich, but comfortable.

So -- do it now. Thank you.

(D)

READER'S COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS & QUESTIONS FOLLOWED BY EDITORIAL RESPONSE

(Feel free to write directly to these people or to us about any issue raised in the newsletter - - It's a vehicle for sharing and learning)

Anna Fulhart RR 1 Uniondale, Indiana 46777

"I came home exhausted from teaching with a terrible cold to find your February newsletter. It is now bedtime and I have spent the whole enjoyable evening with your newsletter and feel so much rested. Thank you so much. I have had a good time. I especially appreciate the background information. Would that the rest of my professional journals be so useful to me."

****

Editorial comment:

What can we say! It's all true! Naturally we love receiving such letters - we do need the feedback. But, even if you hate us, write us, REVILE US. INSULT US. But at least, write to us. We want to improve the newsletter and make it fit your needs more fully.

Mrs. Tommie Harrison Rt. 4 Box 132 Ball Timber Road, Alabaster, Ala 35007

"Thanks for sending me materials. I have really learned and applied this "new" learning. Keep up the good work!

I use folk songs in my 12th grade economic classes, especially with occupations (ole time) and also in my speech classes. I manage to include them whenever possible. I am a high school teacher, but will be doing a one-week Folklore-Local Resource Workshop at the University of Huntsville this summer, July 27-31. I plan to teach and involve fellow teachers in folk songs.

Again, thanks for providing a clearing house for folks like me. I enjoyed your program in New Orleans, but we didn't have enough time."

****

Editorial comment:

Tommie is an example of many classroom teachers who are reaching out to others and how much we can learn from each other. There is so much going on--so many ideas and methods being used. We hope that through the newsletter we can share with each other all of these approaches.

It is true that there is not enough time at a workshop. Usually they are limited to an hour or an hour and a quarter. Speaking to Tom and myself, there is so much that we want to offer, so much to present, that we hardly know where to begin. But even if we had more time, there is just so much teachers can absorb - especially at a convention where they are rushing from session to session. That is why we thought the idea of having two day workshops and then six weeks later a follow-up day was so practical and worthwhile.

This is where we see the newsletter filling a gap. We do keep in touch with each other. We are here to exchange ideas, to receive feedback, to learn that something you tried out didn't work and try to puzzle out why; or that it did work but you added your own special twist or touch.

We have enough ideas and subject areas - occupations, historic events and era, geographic regions to publish four copies of the newsletter for the next ten years. There are thousands of songs - each more beautiful than the other - but we can just put so much into each issue and teachers can just absorb so much. But with your suggestions and contributions, we are making progress.

Nancy Cope, World Around Songs Rt. 5 Buresville, North Carolina 28714

"Thanks so much for your two newsletters. They're wonderful and we're excited about what you're doing. We'll be glad to recommend you to interested teachers. I'm enclosing $1.50 to cover our 1st year's subscription. We are in the midst of the biggest rush season in our 5-year history. But when things settle down a bit (summer and fall) maybe we can share some things with you too."

****

Editorial comment:

Nancy and her husband bought out Cooperative Recreation Service, which was in Delaware, Ohio for many years. "My

husband and I purchased the C.R.S. when its former owner became too old to carry on."
THE WORLD AROUND SONGS is a marvelous resource for teachers. They publish small, inexpensive booklets of folk songs from all around the world. As we noted in our last issue, do send for a copy of their catalogue. It is an easy way for your school or you to build up a worthwhile and varied collection of folk songs and melodies.

Rick Rogers, P.O. Box 105, Eagle Lake,
Florida 33839
28th Day, Moon of Frost in the Tepee

"Thanks for your letter and interest in my adventures as a storyteller. Trying to keep simple the explanation of how falling into the world of storytelling also brought me into the magic of song took some doing.

A simple life in the woods may be what eventually guided my path on to the magic of the ancient tales. The spirit of things also created a pleasure in simple songs that now seems to appeal to those who listen and share my work.

Perhaps in the future some folks would be interested in a couple of my critter tunes that kids seem to enjoy.

As a teacher-now-subbing, writer, bottle washer, erstwhile carpenter and storyteller, the magic of things have taken me outdoors over many miles north and south, east and west.

Today with six white horses, "Old Blue" and 22-24 thousand kids and folks and 4 years behind me, I've moved up into the big time. If being nervous about singing doesn't get me to talking first, I'll screech right into "Old Dan Tucker," "Old Susanna," "Cripple Creek," or "Mountain Dew." Most kids and folks seem eager and crazy enough to sing or listen if you're crazy enough to get it going."

***

traditional songs. I emphasize contemporary music in my classroom, much of which I write myself. We are agreed that the most important thing is that the music be good. Once that criterion is met the applications of that good music is only limited by the scope of the individuals using it. (That scope, incidentally, is always broadened by the kids.) Some music, while not necessarily good, can be of use if it is immediate. I'm thinking specifically of using the *Talking Blues* format to teach just about any concept that needs a new dimension. Teachers and/or kids, can make up a *Talking Blues* to review any subject right on the spot in the classroom. I'm sure you can imagine the motivation and fun created at the moment."

****

Editorial comment:

Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Pete Seeger and others were among the folksingers using the Talking Blues format. Here again is another dimension of using folk song in the classroom. Joan would be glad to pass along some of her ideas and materials to anyone who wants to correspond with her. She has dashed up her own songs to teach about the Babylonians and other ancient civilizations.

YOUNG FOLK MUSICIANS PERFORM IN THE SCHOOLS

For teachers on the East coast, it is a pleasure to announce a valuable resource for the advancement of folksong in the classroom --two dynamic young singers, Jeff Warner and Jeff Davis.

Their music expresses the traditional songs, stories and instruments of the American people: ballads sung in old New England, Revolutionary War songs, songs of the early 19th century.

During the past few years, this team has performed in hundreds of elementary and high schools, combining their traditional classes and also conducting workshop programs. They are friends of ours and we recommend them highly.

For further information, send for literature to:

Jeff Warner, 863 Cedar Swamp Road, Old Brookville, New York 11545, 516-759-1098.

Sharon Ritt, 1707 N. Navajo,
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

"After reading your paper entitled, "Folk Songs and Social Studies," I was amazed how close our ideas are on this subject. I wholeheartedly agree that music and art could be the center of the curriculum with other subjects revolving around them.

I've enclosed some materials I used with a fifth grade class this spring and some reading exercises which I will use this Saturday at our "only" enclosed MALL, for a community reading event, the "Reading-A-Fair" sponsored by local IRA groups."

****

Editorial comment:

We are constantly amazed at the endless variety of new uses for folksong which seem to be turning up every day as we learn of teacher's experiences.

Sharon Ritt of the College of Education, Northern Arizona University, is yet another pioneer in using folksongs as a basic aid to the teaching of reading. She has developed pedagogical exercises to build student's vocabulary and comprehension upon the basis of the song material that she uses.

We feel that many teachers on all levels will be very interested in sharing Sharon's ideas and methods. She has graciously consented to permit us to duplicate her reading exercises and mail them out. If you wish a copy of her USING FOLK MUSIC MATERIALS AS RESOURCES FOR VOCABULARY AND COMPREHENSION SKILL DEVELOPMENT, write to us enclosing 36¢ postage.

Decision On Our Grant Application

We have been notified of the rejection of our application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a grant to establish seminars for teachers in various parts of the country in order to teach the use of folksong in the classroom. While finding much merit in the proposal, the NEH panel considered the project too costly for it to underwrite. They urged us to scale down the application and to resubmit it. We have this suggestion under consideration:

In the meantime, we
HAVE SONG - - - - WILL TRAVEL

(D)

(Continuation of -- HAVE SONG - - WILL TRAVEL)

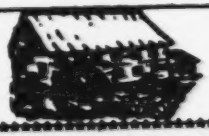
If in your area, funds are available from any source for teacher seminars, workshops or conference days, let us know. The two of us, Scott and Seidman, will be only too happy to take part. Write or call Seidman, 516-466-8546, to discuss details and dates.

Have a Great Summer Vacation

This is the fourth and final issue for this school year. Issue #1 of Volume II will be out in October 1981.

If you have enjoyed it and have been able to utilize materials from the newsletter in your classroom, we are most pleased.

We wish you all a happy and restful summer.



Save Your Copies of the Newsletter

Each one will be devoted to a different topic. Over the years, we will cover many aspects of the Humanities, Social Studies and Literature. Even if you can't use the songs right away for a subject area, they might come in handy the next year.

You might want to give your copy to the librarian or let him/her photostate it and build up a complete file available to all teachers in your school.

For future issues we are thinking the following themes:

Black folksongs, Spirituals, Civil War Irish protest songs, railroad songs, Gold Rush era, labor lullabies, periods of English history--the deportation songs to Australia and New Zealand, impressment, anti-war songs, criminal ballads and "good-night" (execution) songs, sea chanties, whaling in New England, lumbering, farmers and settlers on the prairies. Which ones would you like? Let us know.

Our Philosophy and Creed About Song: An Editorial Statement

The singing of the song by the student is central to everything else. If the song casts its spell, arouses interest, focuses students upon a theme, this is the key to all the rest --- intellectual curiousity, the desire to find out more about the subject, to dig deeper into the what, how, why, when and where.

Folksongs go back hundreds of years. Their very survival has proved that they are a medium that appeals deeply to people throughout the ages. We are bringing into the classroom songs that have been sung in all parts of the country throughout its history.

Folksongs help to slow down the jet age. They show people acting out of conviction and they allow the students to experience (not just watch, but actually experience) the emotions and reactions of those who lived before them. This slowing down, this ability to look into and to share the most intimate thoughts, feelings and beliefs of those who sang these songs --- this establishes a common bond between those who live today and those who went before them.

Students discover through this process how very much they have in common with other human beings who have lived in the past. Thus, through folksongs, we apply the fundamental educational principle that by starting from the familiar, students can more easily discover the unknown and relate to the past.

Six Suggestions For Use of the Newsletter & Folksongs in Your Classroom:

1). Our suggestions and comments that accompany the songs may not work for you. The newsletter is geared to teachers on all grade levels. We have tried to give historical and social background about the songs. We have brainstormed each song and tried to include as many different teaching styles & backgrounds.. Therefore, our comments are suggestions only. If you can use them, fine; if they're not suitable for you, ignore them. We hope that our listing of ideas will trigger your own methods more suitable for your class and particular grade level.

2). *Some songs can be learned and sung simply for their own value.* Too much analysis of songs, especially at the beginning, may be the death of them. But this is not to say that some help to the student in explaining vocabulary, meaning and social and historical setting may not be useful. In general, the more the students know about what they're singing, the more they will want to sing the songs and the more they will spark additional learning.

3). *Don't always expect immediate dividends from a song.* Students need to live with a song and the more they become familiar with it, the more useful this song can be in the teaching process. Once students learn a song, they rarely forget it, nor does it lose its potency to stimulate further learning. Your class might be singing a song three months after you first taught it, when some question or additional comment is raised or becomes appropriate. This could be triggered by a current event, a television program, or another subject area that makes some other aspect of the song pertinent.

This has happened again and again. There is so much motivation packed into each song; so many opportunities for further questions and discussions both on the part of the teacher and also the students. Much of this learning develops almost accidentally or incidentally to the main purpose for originally teaching the song. Much of this "fall-out" or associated ideas are sparked off by resinging the song.

4). *Repetition is essential.* It is imperative that students must be encouraged to sing the songs over and over again in order that they may really be at home with them. The more a song becomes familiar to students, the more enjoyment they will derive from singing it.

Resinging songs is an important addition to our classrooms and is well worth the time involved. Students look forward to these singing periods. It helps to relax them; it is good for discipline as everyone is anxious to sing and it prepares them for further learning. It causes them to relate even more closely and deeply with the incidents and persons they are singing about. It makes the students much more sensitive to the issues in the Humanities and Social Studies. It stimulates further discussion and reflection.

5). *One and the same song can be utilized not just on one grade level, but many.* It is important to understand that songs can become the companions of children's lives and can grow with them. They will then yield different types of meanings at different periods in the child's educational life.

As an example of this, see The Fox, *FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM*, vol. I, #3, page 17. At K-2, it is simply a fun song. From grades 4 through 10, it can introduce a discussion of science and the chain of life; the places of all created beings, including predators in the life cycle. Does man have the right to dominate creation, or is he merely one link in the chain? This can lead students to the study of wild life through a variety of media -- wide reading of biography, fiction, nonfiction, science, nature studies and visits to museums and zoos.

(D)

6). We cannot emphasize too strongly that folksongs have indispensable value to children's lives *from the very beginning* and in particular *in the primary grades*.

a). Only in the earliest years is it possible to lay a truly excellent foundation in providing for a love of singing and for the child's feeling that it is as natural to sing as to breathe.

b). Among the greatest of all teachers of folksong in the classroom was a woman who taught song for many years in Virginia to children K-2, Ruth Crawford Seeger. We suggest that all teachers seek to acquire her book *American Folk Songs for Children* (Doubleday, 1948, still available in a paperback edition). We feel that her introduction, pp. 13-48, is one of the best statements of the philosophy of song for young children that there is.

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FOLKSONGS IN THE CLASSROOM - NORTHERN NEW MEXICAN STYLE

BY JENNY VINCENT P.O. BOX 214
SAN CRISTOBAL, NEW MEXICO 87564

Just this past January I presented a workshop for the New Mexico Music Educator's Conference in Albuquerque on *"Spanish Folksongs in the Classroom - K Through 7."* It had been several years since I last worked with teachers on this subject, and most of the teachers present had never attended any of my sessions. When our Bilingual Program in the Taos Municipal Schools started, some ten years ago, I frequently was called upon to teach Spanish language folksongs to teachers, and in the classroom, as I had been doing it for many years, and it was thought that I knew more about the subject.

My involvement in the teaching of folksongs in the school began during the last year of World War II. I had been singing at Farmer's Union meetings in Taos County, and one of the teachers in the elementary school in Questa, New Mexico, asked me if I would come to sing for her 5th and 6th grade classrooms. I was delighted. She emphasized, of course, that I shouldn't sing Farmer's Union songs, but she would like me to teach some of the other songs.

To set the stage, at that time some 90% of the children in that school were Spanish-speaking. Their teacher shared their language and culture, but no Spanish was allowed to be spoken on the school grounds. This particular teacher, however, was bound and determined to give her students some of their mutual heritage, through singing games, poems, stories, riddles, sayings, etc. Right away she asked me if I knew a Spanish folksong that had a chorus "tin-tin-tin-tin." That is all she could remember, and she couldn't find anyone who remembered the words or all of the melody. I looked through my growing collection of Spanish language folksong books and found "El Capotin" (The Raincape). It was a love song and I taught it both in Spanish and in English. The children and their teacher helped me with the Spanish pronunciation. (I had been teaching myself Spanish from books and folksongs, but needed the authentic touch!). The children, the teacher and I all giggled over the words, as 5th and 6th graders would, but they loved it and learned it very quickly. That was the beginning of my becoming involved with the schools in that area. As this teacher was moved about from school to school in the rural villages, she always asked me to help her out. We did songs, singing games, and folk dances, and she always encouraged me and recommended me to other teachers. There were no music teachers at the time in the rural schools, so my visits to the schools served two purposes: teaching music and cultural heritage.

These teaching experiences, plus a few folksong and music concerts at nearby universities, initiated my dedication to researching and sharing what I learned. The Spanish folksongs were not only from New Mexico but also from old

Mexico, Central America, Puerto Rico and finally South America. Always, though, I concentrated on the Spanish folksongs of New Mexico and the U.S. Southwest in particular.

Folklore plays a very important part in an area where children and adults are attempting to achieve a good self-image. Just last year I was invited to go into the 9th grade Social Studies classes to talk about my experiences with folksongs and to sing for the students and to discuss the songs' importance in learning to appreciate our heritage. Occasionally, a few individuals would express their ideas, but that age student was not as articulate as some of the elementary children.

"To whom do you go when you want information on any particular song or story?" This question produced interesting results with elementary school children. One child said to me, after we had learned a song about the "tecolote" (Aztec word for owl, and our northern New Mexico area): "My grandfather says you must be an important person to know that song!" The other children agreed that the best person to go to for folk story and song information were their grandparents. "They know all about the old things!"

There is one technique for using folklore in the classroom that has been most successful in our area, and that is the bringing into the school members of the community who are known to tell stories, sing songs, or engage in some folk craft. For a number of years, Federal money was available through Title I and Title VII to compensate the individuals for their efforts. This is most rewarding, especially for the senior citizen groups, who finally are being recognized in a small way for their cultural contributions. Above all, it gave the children in the classrooms a sense of pride in their community, their traditions and reinforced their own self images.

People ask me if I consider myself a folksinger, and I use to think I was, but then I thought more of myself as a singer of folksongs (a fine distinction, it seems). But now I consider myself a *folklore practitioner*, available for almost any occasion, and on long or short notice. The important thing is that *I believe in folklore*, and its continuing importance in all aspects of our lives. The sharing of it not only enriches our own lives, but helps us to appreciate the heritage of others around us.

(For more about Jenny Vincent and her records of Spanish Folksongs, see our last issue, Vol. I, Issue #3, page 4.)

The rest of this issue is devoted to the songs and background of America's greatest hero and folklore figure, the Cowboy.

FREE --- 20 pages of Teaching Ideas About the American Cowboy --- FREE

We have so much material and songs for this issue that we're fairly bursting at the seams and we couldn't get everything in. For 3 additional songs with music and loads of suggestions and ideas on how to utilize and follow up the songs in your classroom, be sure to send for the 20-page list of TEACHING IDEAS ON THE AMERICAN COWBOY AND THE WEST. It was compiled by working classroom teachers on all grade levels, K-12 from eight years of Seidman's course, "The Ballad of America", given at C.W. Post. It contains practical ideas on art, music, dramatics, language arts, values, map work, etc. Just write in and ask for it. Include 50¢ in stamps. We'll supply the envelope. And don't forget to check out the other items in the *Checklist of Free Materials*.

(D)

THE AMERICAN COWBOY AND HIS SONGS - AN INTRODUCTION

A study of the cowboy opens up to students the study of ecology, economics, history, geography, values, mapwork, art, literature, costume, popular culture and cookery. It acknowledges the contribution of Mexican and Black cowboys; it celebrates the beauty and majesty of our country in an area where a horse was all and a man on foot was no man at all.

The High Plains, before the coming of the white man, had been for centuries the home of Native American hunters, for whom the buffalo was the main source of life. With the extermination of the buffalo, the railroads built westward to carry out settlers and to bring back cattle to fee the people of the eastern cities. Cowboys drove their wild herds of longhorn cattle from the Texas borderlands along the trails leading up to the railheads.

Between 1866 and 1896, the age of the cowboy and the long trails came and went. Six million head of cattle were driven northward to provide meat for the eastern market and for the Indian reservations and to stock the ranches of Montana, Wyoming, the Dakotas and Colorado. Thus in a flash was created the kingdom of the open grasslands which has left its ineffaceable imprint upon the national memory.

It was an epic of *frontier life* with the cowboy as its hero. It was a hardy, dangerous and challenging existence which kindled a passion into the hearts of adventurous youth; and it was a way of life which only the toughest could survive. The trails along which the herds had to be driven covered hundreds of miles of open territory. Rivers had to be forded, sometimes in flood. Stampedes had to be met and checked. Cattle thieves had to be fought. The cowboy was in the saddle day after day for many hours and also, at night, as well. His moments of rest were few. His was an unceasing life of struggle against the elements.

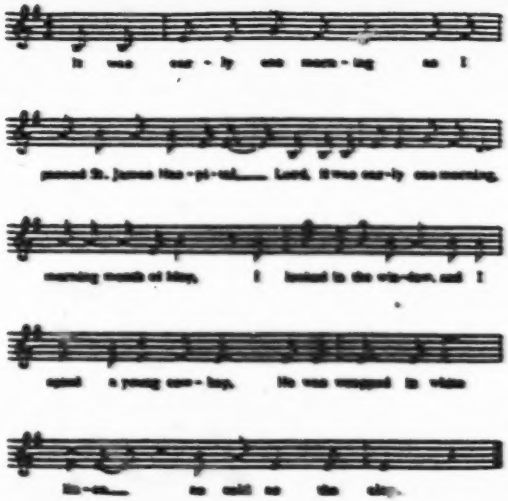
From this range life, came the cowboy's songs. These grew out of the familiar heritage of Irish and English singing which immigrant families brought with them to the West and which the cowboy learned at his mother's knee. The songs, of course, changed under the impact of the new experience. Rhythms were molded to the tempo of a horse's stride, and new lyrics were composed to express the joys and fears of the horseman's life. Cowboys, too, had songs for the bunkhouse and campfire. Here the traditional ballads and songs did good service.

The cowboy had scarcely disappeared from the open range than a cult of the cowboy arose. People, locked into monotonous, low-paying, back-breaking factory work, dreamed of the great open spaces and the freedom of the exuberant, wild cowboy who could travel where he wished. The romantic image of the cowboy as a hero was born and prospered and was nourished by lurid newspaper and magazine and pennyback accounts. And the cowboy himself did his best to live up to that image. He loved a joke -- especially on tenderfoot -- and if they wanted to think he was wild, he aimed to act it to the hilt! In the years that followed, the public were deluged with movies, radio shows and TV drama about the cowboy.

But, strangely enough, the media have done very little to preserve the body of cowboy songs that forms one of the loveliest parts of the American musical heritage. Today, it is sad but true, that this cowboy musical heritage is in danger of being lost to American youth. Nowhere, perhaps, is the obligation of the teacher more clear to strive for the preservation and for the use of that heritage by bringing it into the classroom and making it available to students.

Brief Bibliography -- for Teachers and Students compiled by John A. Scott

The classic study of the cowboy, originally published by A. Knopf, Inc., and now available in paperback, is Lawrence I. Seidman's *Once In the Saddle: The Cowboy's Frontier - 1866-1900* (New American Library). A useful teacher's guide is available free of charge, see Checklist of Free Materials in this issue, page 25.

(Also see the bottom of page 10 for additional bibliography)

Collected, adapted and arranged by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax. Copyright © 1938 and renewal 1966, Ludlow Music, Inc., New York, N.Y. Used by permission. Transcribed from the singing of Peter Kinsy by John Anthony Scott.

It was early one morning as I passed St. James Hospital,
Lord, It was early one morning, morning month of May,
I looked in the window, and I spied a young cowboy,
He was wrapped in white linen as cold as the clay.

Says "Come mother, dear mother, and sit yourself nigh me,
And father, dear father, come sing me a song,
For my knee bones are achin' and my poor heart is breakin',
Well, I know I'm a poor cowboy, and I know I done wrong.

"It was once in the saddle I used to look handsome,
It was once in the saddle I used to go gay,
First took to drinking, and then took to gambling,
Got shot in the breast, and I'm dying today.

"Get six young gamblers to carry my coffin,
Sixteen pretty whores gals to sing me a song
Tell them to bring 'long a bunch of them sweet-smelling roses,
So they won't smell me while they drive me along."

It was early one morning as I passed St. James Hospital,
Lord, one morning, morning month of May,
I looked in the window, and spied a young cowboy,
He was wrapped in white linen as cold as the clay.

Movies and TV have done much to exploit the violence of the cowboy's life. If these sources are to be believed, cowboys spent a lot of their time in town shooting each other up.

In actuality cowboys spent little time in town -- most of their days and nights were passed out on the open range. For months on end all of their energies were absorbed in trailing the herds from the place of origin in Texas to the Indian Reservations or to the railheads on the plains.

When finally they did reach town at the trail's end, the cowboys were on the rebound after weary weeks of loneliness, toil and danger. Drunken orgies, quarrels, duels and death were not infrequently the result. This aspect of the cowboy's life makes good theater, and has been the most exploited. We should note that the hazards of the trail -- snakebite, drowning, accidents with horses and with cattle -- accounted for more fatalities than saloon altercations.

The Cowboy's Lament gives simple but moving expression to the cowboy's predicament. The first verse tells how an observer sees this young man in the hospital, lying dead. The song then moves back in time and tells us how the cowboy came to die. At the end, in a repetition of the first verse we are left with the picture of stillness and of death.

Students may be familiar with a version of this song, *The Streets of Laredo*. Encourage them to learn *The Cowboy's Lament*. There is great dignity in the verses, the melody has a wonderful soaring beauty. Still another version is given on the following page

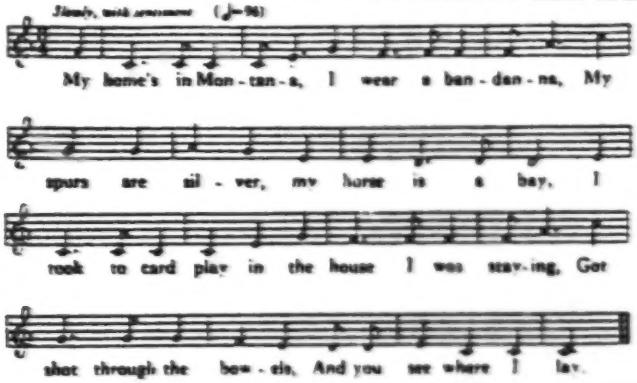
(continued from page 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY)

Three other excellent works that may be consulted by teachers at all levels and students from grades four up are:

Harold Felton, *Cowboy Jamboree: Western Songs and Lore*
S.J. Sackett, *Cowboy and the Songs They Sang*
Don Ward, *Cowboys and Cattle Country*. American Heritage Junior Library

A fine filmstrip is: *The Negro Cowboys*. Southwest Education Filmstrips 1969, 57 frames, color.

The Cowboy's Lament - from John & Alan Lomax, Cowboy Songs & Other Frontier Ballads


My home's in Mon - tan - a, I wear a ban - dan - na, My
spurs are sil - ver, my horse is a bay, I
took to card play in the house I was stay-ing, Got
shot through the bow - els, And you see where I lay.

Go gather around you
A crowd of young cowboys,
And tell them the story
Of this my sad fate,
Tell one and the other,
Before they go further
To stop their wild roving
Before it's too late

It was once in the saddle
That I would go dashing,
'Twas once in the saddle
That I would go gay,
First to the card house
And then to the dram house,
Got shot in the bowels
And you see where I lay.

Let sixteen gamblers
Lay a hand on my coffin,
Let sixteen cowboys
Come carry me along,
And take me to the graveyard,
And lay the sod o'er me,
I'm just a young cowboy
And I know I done wrong!

Then drag your rope slowly
And rattle your spurs lowly,
And give a wild whoop
As you carry me along,
And take me to Boot Hill
And cover me with roses,
I'm just a young cowboy
And I know I done wrong!

This lament, in one of its variants, was heard wherever cowboys gathered. The theme and the story can be traced back to an Irish song about a young soldier dying from veneral disease. St. James Hospital, in Dublin, was the hospital where these cases were treated, usually unsuccessfully in the 17th and 18th centuries. Thus, this song, carried over to the new world by sailors and immigrants, and gradually making its way out west, was gradually changed from being about a soldier to a cowboy.

In the cowboy version, mention of syphilis, social disease or sex is gone. The victim is a young cowboy, shot down in his prime. As Alan Lomax, one of the great collectors of American folksongs wrote, "American singers have censored references to the disease out of their many variants -- the cowboy dies of bullet wounds, instead of the wounds of love."

But some of the verses, especially in the "Streets of Laredo," keep hints of its distant past. For instance, the "wrapping of a body in white linen" , the verse, "Beat your drum slowly and play the fifes lowly", and "put bunches of roses all over my coffin." If we think of the dry, arid West, where could cowboys gather roses to strew over their comrade's coffin? Indeed, most cowboys who died, were seldom given the luxury of being buried in a coffin, but were just bundled in their blanket and put in to the earth. So once again, we see the threads of folksong stretching back into the past; the people keeping some verses and modifying others, to bring the story up to date.

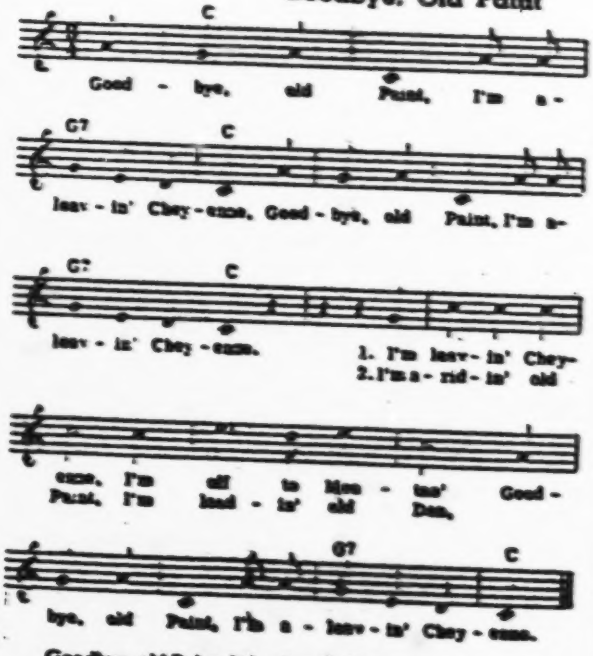
A real cowboy, Teddy Blue Abbot, in his autobiography, *We Pointed Them North*, wrote:

> "I had other favorites, too -- that Laredo song was another, "The Cowboy's Lament" I believe it is usually called. They were singing it when I was punching cows in Nebraska in '76 (1876).

"I've always had to stop and laugh every time I sang the Laredo song, in spite of it being so sad. Because, first he is lying there dead, wrapped up in his blanket, and then he starts in telling this big, long story of his life and how he met his downfall."

"I first took to drinking and then to cardplaying -- and they'd all be drunk when they were singing it, most likely. Cowboys used to love to sing about people dying. I don't know why. I guess it was because they were so full of life themselves."

The song lends itself to artistic expression. The students can do a mural or a frieze showing scenes from the song. Each verse lends itself -- the cowboy as he rode gaily into town on his bay (multicolored) horse, his silver spurs catching the sunlight. (Cowboys were quite vain of their dress-up clothes and spent much of their pay on fancy saddles, boots embellished with silver and embroidery and on shining, clinking spurs). The gamblers and cowboys carrying his coffin mournfully to the open grave; the warning to other young cowboys as they soberly listen to end their wild ways. Each verse lends itself to an image -- and always, the small, one street, wooden frontier town, and stretching out all around it in every direction, the vast, open spaces of the endless rolling plains.

Goodbye, Old Paint

C
Good - bye, old Paint, I'm a -
G7 C
leav - in' Chey - enne. Good - bye, old Paint, I'm a -
G7 C
leav - in' Chey - enne.
1. I'm leav - in' Chey -
2. I'm a - rid - in' old
enne, I'm off to Mon - tan'
Paint, I'm lead - in' old
Good -
Dan,
G7 C
bye, old Paint, I'm a - leav - in' Chey - enne.

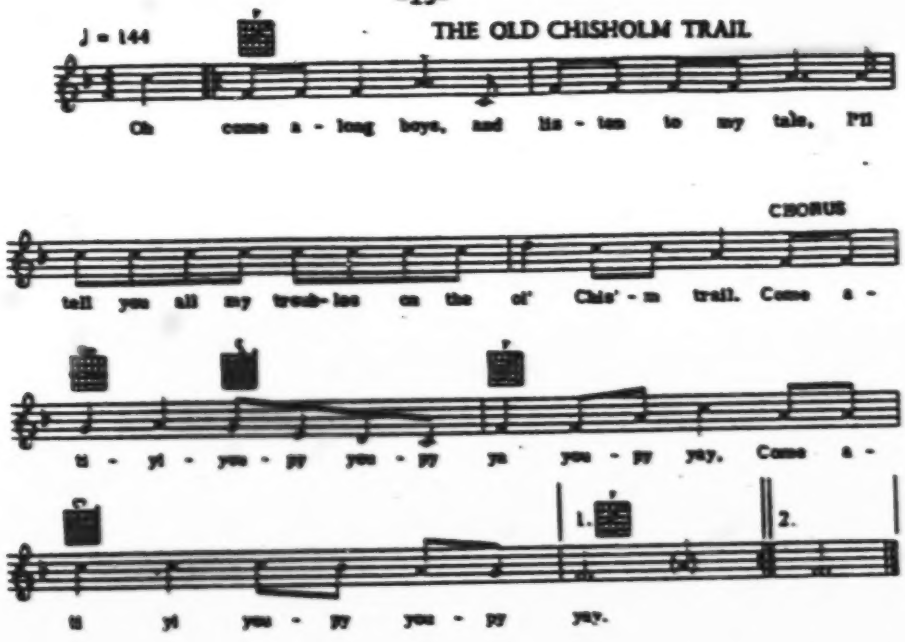
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.
I'm off to Montan' to throw the hoolihan,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.
They feed in the coulees, they water in the draw,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leavin' Cheyenne.

This famous saddle song was first collected by John A. Lomax before the first World War. It is a good song for improvising, which makes it especially useful to those working with very young children; also for those teaching songs in a camp setting.

It was traditionally the last song sung to end a dance in the southwest. Folklore has it that as long as anyone could remember a verse and sing it, the dance went on. As no cowboy ever wanted a good time to end, there were endless verses and once started, they were usually roared out in unison by all present.

Cowboys were used to going to bed early, right after sundown, as they had to rise before dawn to take care of their cattle. Thus late hours played havoc with their rest and the night after a dance was apt to be painful for the sleepy and tired cowpunchers. Not used to being on their feet, they usually ached from all the dancing.

Vocabulary:
a paint horse - of mixed colors
coulee - a dry creek bed, a steep-walled ravine or valley
draw - gully shallower than a ravine
throw the hoolihan - see vocabulary of *I Ride An Old Paint*, page 15.

♩ = 144
THE OLD CHISHOLM TRAIL
Oh come a - long boys, and lis - ten to my tale, I'll
CHORUS
tell you all my trou- bles on the ol' Chis' - m trail. Come a -
ti - yi - you - py you - py ya you - py yay. Come a -
1.
2.
ti yi you - py you - py yay.

The *Chisholm Trail* was sung on every drive along all the trails up from Texas into Kansas to the railroad corrals and on up into Montana, the Dakotas and Wyoming. The easy melody and short verses lent themselves to the making of new variants and verses, always to the same lively tune. Cow punchers used to say that if you laid all the verses end to end, they would cover the long trail all the way up into Colorado.

Most famous of trails was the Chisholm Trail which led from southern Texas north to the railroad towns of Abilene and Dodge City, Kansas, almost a thousand miles of wild, arid, empty country.

On this trail, the dozen cowboys and their band of horses would gently nudge a herd of two thousand wild, shiftish Texas longhorns, trying to keep them all together and alive and fattening them up along the way so that when they reached the railroad corral, the cattle would fetch the best prices. There was not a house, a fort, any help along this path. Only the cowboy with his nerve, wit and humor to keep this mass of animals moving along.

Into this song, they poured every aspect of their experience and background from a stampede to crossing a river to a mean old foreman, bawling them out. Following, are a few of the endless verses:

1) Come along boys and listen to my tale,
I'll tell you of my troubles on the
old Chisholm Trail.

Chorus:
Come a-ti-yi-you-py, you-py ya, you-py yay.
Come a-ti-yi you-py you-py yay.

2) We left the ranch on June twenty-third
With a drove of Texas cattle, two
thousand in the herd.

3) Oaten dollar horse and a forty dollar
saddle,
And I'm going to punch in Texas cattle.

4) It's bacon and beans most every day,
I'd as soon be eating prairie hay.

5) I woke up in the morning on the old
Chisholm Trail,
Rope in my hand and a cow by the tail.

(D)

6) It's cloudy in the west and it looks like rain,
And my darn old slicker's in the wagon again.

7) It's raining like hell and it's getting mighty cold,
These longhorn cattle are getting hard to hold

8) Saddle up boys and saddle up well,
For I think these cattle have scattered to hell.

9) I jumped in the saddle, grabbed hold of the horn,
Best darned coupuncher that ever was born.

10) Feet in the stirrup and seat in the saddle,
I hung and rattled with those goldarn cattle.

11) We rounded them up and put them on the cars,
And that was the last of them old Two Bars

12) With my hand on the horn and seat in the sky,
I'll quit herding cattle in the sweet by and by.

13) Going to the boss to get my money,
Going back south to see my honey.

14) I'm going back home I'm not jokin' or lyin',
I'm goin' back home just a-yelling' and a-flyin'.

15) Aropin' and a-tyin' and a-brandin' all day,
Working mighty hard for mighty little pay.

16) I'm going to get married just as soon as I can,
And I won't punch cattle for no damn man!

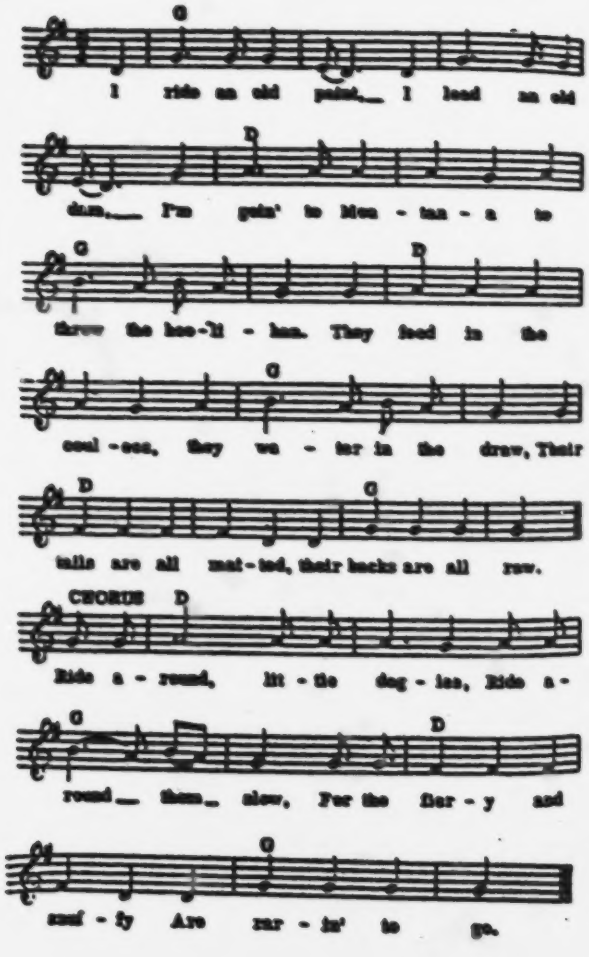
The verses reflect the men's feelings, their equipment and their dreams. Bacon and beans -- especially beans -- were the mainstay of the cook. The men had them three times a day -- breakfast, lunch and supper. Often the cook would holler out, "I've got ten thousand different delicious things for you to eat -- and they're all beans!"

The cook and his chuckwagon was one of the most important ingredients on a trail drive. The only luxury the men got was their hot meal at night. The cook would start right out after an early breakfast, wash his dishes, pack up his gear and roll right along in front of the slowly moving herd to reach the "Nooning" spot before the men and have their mid-day meal prepared. Then he'd clean up and take off for the camp where the herd was to bed down for the night.

He'd build up his fire and start cooking so that when the tired men arrived they have a hot meal, with lots of six-gun coffee waiting for them. It was called six-gun coffee, because it was so strong that the cowboys said you could float a six-shooter in it. The cowboy liked his coffee strong and drank endless cups of it, whenever he could, especially before going on night duty.

The cook also carried the men's valuables, took care of their bedrolls and personal possessions and held their money during bets. At the campfire, his word was law. The men could not talk during breakfast or lunch, as the cook wanted them to eat up in a hurry so that he could clean up the dishes and get on his way. A good cook made for a happy outfit and a man who antagonized the cook was in serious trouble with all of his comrades.

Vocabulary:
grabbed ahold of the horn - the horn of the saddle, made of metal, covered with leather, served for him to grab on to or to anchor the lariat when he is roping.

I Ride an Old Paint

G
I ride an old paint, I lead an old
D
dun, I'm goin' to Mex - ico a to
G D
throw the hoo-'l - him. They feed in the
G
coul-ees, they wa - ter in the draw, Their
D G
tails are all mat-ted, their backs are all raw.
CHORUS D
Ride a - round, lit - tle dog - ies, Ride a -
G D
round them slow, For the fier - y and
G
snuf - fy Are rar - in' to go.

Old Bill Jones had two daughters and a song,
One went to Denver and the other went wrong.
His wife she died in a poolroom fight,
Still he sings from morning till night.

Chorus

Oh, when I die, take my saddle from the wall,
Put it on my pony, and lead him from his stall.
Tie my bones to his back, turn our faces to the West,
And we'll ride the prairie that we love the best.

Chorus

This beautiful song catches the love of the cowboy for his hard, outdoor life and the beautiful, endlessly stretching untamed prairies where he lived. Carl Sandburg wrote in his introduction to this song in his *American Songbag:*

"The song smells of saddleleather and sketches of ponies and landscapes and varies in theme from a realistic presentation of the drab Bill Jones and his violent wife to an ethreal prayer and a cry of phantom tone. There is rich poetry in the image of the rider so loving a horse he begs when he dies his bones shall be tied to the horse and the two of them sent wandering with their faces turned to the West."

Vocabulary:

old paint - a horse with irregular patterns of white and colored areas. Cowboys called their pinto ponies "paint", a horse of more than one color. Pinto comes from the Spanish word "pintado" (peen-ta-do) which means painted or spotted.

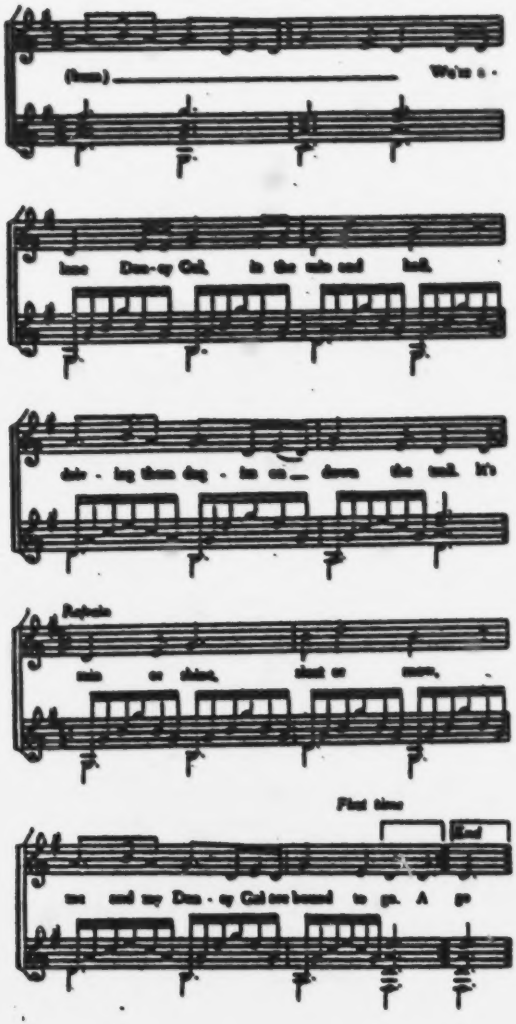
throw the hoo-'li-him - a very dangerous stunt for both steer and rider. It meant the cowboy diving down from a running horse onto a steer's head with such violence that the animal's head is forced down into the ground instantly and he is sometimes somersaulted heels overhead into a cloud of dust and flying hoofs. This is not allowed at present day rodeos, "bulldogging" being dangerous enough.

fiery and snuffy - wild or spirited cattle. Often the leaders of the herd, or outlaws who might spook or start a herd stampeding on the least excuse.

couless - dry creeks, a deep dry gulch with sides sloping less steeply than a canyon.

draw - a shallow drain for rainfall

old dun - a female horse (from dame)

Rain or Shine

(Tune)
We're a -
lone Dan-cy Gal, in the rain and hail,
drivin' them dog - ies on down the trail. It's
Refrain
rain or shine, sleet or snow,
First time
Last
me and my Dan - cy Gal are bound to go. A go

We're alone Dancy Gal, in the rain and the hail
Drivin' them dogies on down the trail.

REFRAIN:
It's rain or shine, sleet or snow
Me and my Dancy Gal are bound to go!

A cowboy's life is a wearisome thing,
It's rope and brand and ride and sing.

REFRAIN

We ride the range from sun to sun,
For a cowboy's work, Lord, is never done.

REFRAIN

He's up and gone at the break of day,
Driving them dogies all on their way.

REFRAIN

We're alone Dancy Gal, in the rain and the hail
Drivin' them dogies on down the trail.

Every item of the cowboy's outfit was specially fashioned to serve its purpose of protecting and helping him to do his job and exist on the wide, open endless high plains. Most of his outfit was adapted from the Mexican cowboy, the "Vaquero" who had learned over the decades how to survive in the hot, pittiless plains and ridges of Mexico.

Thus, the cowboy's hat was wide-brimmed to keep the sun off his head and to protect it from the snows and rain. It also kept the dirt and mud from the hooves of the cattle and horses from flying into his eyes. He could also use his hat to signal to the other men, as a drinking vessel to carry water to himself or his horse and as a pillow at night.

His boots were made to protect his feet and upper calves from thorns in the underbrush; from getting crushed between the cattle when he rode among them and to protect him from snakebite on the ground. The high heel was needed to keep his feet from slipping through the stirrups and to dig into the ground when he had roped a steer and needed to brace himself. They were not made for walking and the cowboy, like all horsemen, hated to walk. Every job that could be done on horseback was carried out without the cowboy dismounting.

His bandana or kerchief was useful to wipe the sweat off his brow, to tie over his mouth to keep the dust from flying down his throat, as a bandage or sling in case of an injury and as a blind for his pony when needed.

But the one live animal on which the cowboy depended, which he prized and which he often came to love, was his horse. A horse for the cowboy was an instrument of work, a means of transportation and often

the difference between life and death. For without a horse to carry him the vast distances over the prairie, a man was helpless. A horse thief was hated and when captured, was quickly tried and executed.

Andy Adams recalled the end of a long drive to Montana and how he felt when the horse he had come to love so well had to be abandoned:

> "At no time in my life, before or since, have I felt so keenly the parting between man and horse as I did that September evening in Montana. For on the trail an affection springs up between a man and his mount which is almost human. Every privation which he endures, his horse endures with him -- carrying him through falling weather, swimming rivers by day and riding in the lead of stampededs by night, always faithful, always willing, and always patiently enduring every hardship, from exhausting hours under saddle to the sufferings of a dry drive.
>
> Now, when the trail is a lost occupation and reverie, and reminiscences carry the mind back to that day, there are friends and faces that may be forgotten, but there are horses that never will be. There were emergencies in which the horse was everything, his rider merely the accessory. But together, man and horse, they were the force that made it possible to move the millions of cattle which passed up and over the various trails of the west."

In this song, the cowboy tells of his love for his loyal companion, whom he calls his Doney, derived from the Spanish "Dona", meaning lady or sweetheart.

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Colorado Trail -- See song on Page 21 of this issue.

As the students croon this song, very slowly, for the cowboy never sang his lullabies quickly. They were meant to last and to soothe the nervous, sleeping cattle --let them imagine the spread out herd of two thousand or more animals.

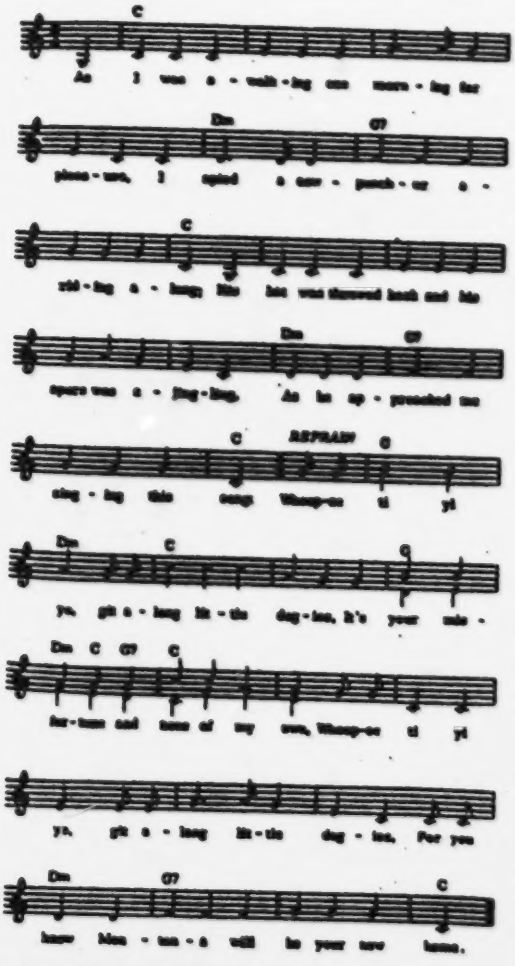
Being a horse wrangler, breaking and taking care of the horses, was a hard and dangerous job. In the contest between man and horse to break him to the saddle, it was often the rider who paid the price and went down first. Carl Sandberg in his introduction to this song, writes:

"A horse wrangler brought a car of ponies to Duluth, Minnesota. The next day after brave stunt riding, he was alid in a hospital bed with 'ruptures on both sides.' He told the surgeon, Dr. T.L. Chapman in a soft, forgiving voice, 'That was a terribly bad hoss -- not only throwed me, but he trompled me.' Out of the past years, this rider had, Dr. Chapman's examination disclosed, 'bones of both upper and lower legs broken, fractures of collar bone on both sides, numerous fractions of both arms and wrists and many scars from lacerations and tramplings, the bones knit any way that God and Nature let them heal." (*The American Songbag* p. 462)

All cowboys carried their scars and knitted broken bones as evidence of many falls from being thrown while riding their ponies and caring for the cattle.

A cowboy had to be brave and resillient. In his contest with the elements and nature, only his determination, skill and courage could help him survive. A man who was not brave did not remain a cowboy long. Yet most of them were soft-spoken and seldom spoke of their difficulties unless to poke fun at them.

In almost every other occupation, when the weather was stormy, snowy or rainy, the worker could wait inside of shelter until it improved. But it was the calling of the cowboy that the worst the weather, the more the cattle needed him; the more dependent they were upon him and more hours he was in the saddle. His job was to nursemaid these animals and see to it that they survived storms, river crossings and predators. The need for a good song and the image of the girl he loved was important to help him keep up his spirits and wile away the time.

GIT ALONG LITTLE DOGIES

C
As I was a-walk-ing one morn-ing for
Dm G7
plea-sure, I spied a cow-punch-er a-
C
rid-ing a-long; His hat was thrown back and his
Dm G7
spurs was a-jing-ling, As he ap-proached me
C REFRAIN G
sing-ing this song: Whoop-ee ti yi
Dm C G
yo, git a-long lit-tle dog-ies, It's your mis-
Dm C G7 C
for-tune and none of my own, Whoop-ee ti yi
yo, git a-long lit-tle dog-ies, For you
Dm G7 C
know Mon-ta-na will be your new home.

As I was a-walking one morning for pleasure,
I spied a cow-puncher a-riding along;
His hat was thrown back and his spurs was a-jingling,
As he approached me singing this song:

Whoopee ti yi yo, git along little dogies,
It's your misfortune and none of my own,
Whoopee ti yi yo, git along little dogies,
For you know Montana will be your new home.

Some of the boys goes up the trail for pleasure,
But that's where they git it most awfully wrong;
For you've no idea the trouble they give us
When we go driving them dogies along.

Whoopee ti yi yo, etc.

Oh, you'll be rough for Uncle Sam's Injuns,
"It's beef, beef, beef," I hear them cry.
Git along, git along, git along little dogies,
You're going to be beef steers by and by.

Whoopee ti yi yo, etc.

THE BOY WHO WAS TAKEN

One day in summer when daylight was fading
T'was down by the river I wandered alone;
I met an old man who was weeping and wailing
And rocking a cradle that was not his own.

Singing ay little laddy, sweet baby lie easy,
Your own Daddy will never be known
O its weeping and wailing and rocking the cradle
For somebody's baby that is not your own.

When first I married your innocent mother,
I thought—like a fool—I was blessed with a wife,
But to my misfortune and sad lamentation
She proved both the plague and the curse of my life.

Singing ay little laddy, etc.

'Twas every night to a ball or a party,
She left me here rocking the cradle alone,
And this innocent baby here calls me his Daddy,
Though little he knows that I am not his own.

Sing ay little laddy, etc.

So all you young fellas that some day may marry,
Take my advice—leave the women alone,
Or by the Lord Harry if ever you marry
She'll bring you a baby and swear its your own.

Sing ay little laddy, etc.

Git Along Little Dogies is a Texas trail song adapted directly from a Boston-Irish lullaby. It is an important song to teach young people because it helps us to make an important point. In our musical history, we start with a certain heritage of materials from the past -- lyrics, ballads, melodies. We learn this heritage and make it our own; and then we try to use it in new ways to express our own fresh experiences. Human creation -- and this is perhaps true in all fields of human endeavor -- results from a constant dialog between creators in the present and the creations of the past. Creation itself requires us to master what is old and gone: it is a leapfrog process in which the past is the springboard that helps us to vault into the future. We study and master the past in order to stand upon the shoulders of those who went before us. Without their life and their creation, we would have no place to start from.

When Irish immigrants came to Boston in the early 19th century, they brought *The Boy Who Was Taken* with them; and they sang it to the fine Irish melody which is reproduced on the left hand side of our previous sheet. Later, some of the children of these Boston Irish grew up and moved out West. When they became cowboys and took to the trails *The Boy That Was Taken* was pressed into service as a lullaby to sing to cattle as the cattlemen rode their watches by night. The melody and the refrain remained pretty much the same, but new words were composed to tell about the cowboy's life and experience. Thus a brand new American song came into being -- all the way from Ireland out of Texas.

The cowboys sang this as they rode along the trail trying to keep the stragglers and the lazy steers up with the rest of the herd. The cattle's misfortune is that they're being driven off their old grazing grounds and up the trail into Wyoming or Montana to stock new ranches or to end up as food on Indian reservations. The buffalo having been slaughtered by the white hunters, the power of the plain Indians had been broken and the military was able to gather them up and herd them onto reservations. No longer able to hunt the buffalo, the Indians were now dependent for food upon the wild, domestic cattle that the cowboy crews drove up the trail.

A once proud and independent people had been reduced to becoming wards of the government. Their means of earning a living and their life style having been destroyed, they were reduced to accepting charity. With the destruction of the buffalo, the West had been opened up for exploitation. The railroads built out West to carry the cattle back to the East to feed the cities. But in addition the railroads brought out on their western journeys, farmers and settlers who soon populated the Great Plains and put an end to the trail drives and the empire of the cowboys.

As the cowboys drove the cattle up the trail, they moved very slowly. The idea was to allow the cattle to graze on the free grass and water along the way and to end up at the railroad corrals fatter and heavier than when they started. Therefore, they did not push them too hard. Eight to ten miles was an average day's travel. Amazingly the cowboys came to know every steer by sight and position and personality. Like human beings

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Vocabulary:

dogies - originally a young calf deserted by his mother was called a dogie; later came to be applied to all steers.
"You'll be soup for Uncle Sam's Injuns" - some trail drivers drove their herds to Indian reservations under contract with the U.S. government to provide the Native Americans on those reservations with meat.
jimson weed - a poisonous, tall, coarse weed.
sandbur - a weed that grows in sandy, waste places with prickly foliage.
bed-ground - a level, grassy area near water where cattle are bedded down for the night.
prickly pear - a cacti with yellow flowers and pulpy, pear-shaped edible fruit.
roll up - close up together, group the cattle more closely.
cholla - a form of cactus (pronounced as if spelled choya).

(D)

on a hike, the cattle assumed their own position in the herd and never varied. The strong and the quick took the lead position. The weak and ornery fell to the back, called the "drag". The cattle, just like hikers, took partners and stayed with them for the whole trip. If a cow became foot-sore or hurt, she'd drop to the back of the herd. Then, when she became well again, she would assume her original position in the herd. Thus, the cowboys came to know where each and every cow was in the herd.

The cowpunchers knew that if they didn't watch and protect and encourage each animal to keep up, that the dropouts and weaklings would fall prey to the wolves and the elements. It is the proud history of the cowboys that no herd was ever abandoned or given up of the thousands that started up the trail. The cowboy nursed and looked after those wild animals like he was their own mammy and many a poor, weak calf was carried across the cowboy's saddle till he was strong enough to survive on his own feet.

##########

Activities

Students could *trace the trail drives on maps*. Almost all of them started down in southern Texas and moved up north, along various trails until they reached the Kansas railroad towns which sprang up as the railroads inched westward.

Other drives continued up into the more northern states (Territories at those times in the 1870's and 1880's) into Wyoming, Montana, the Dakotas and Colorado.

The *paintings and sculptures of* Remington, Jackson and other *western artists* could be explored by the students to see how these artists portrayed the cowboy -- in spirit, style and costume.

A great book to read to/with the class is the Newberry winner, by Will James, *Cowboy Horse*. It vividly and accurately describes the importance of the cowboy's horse and

describes the importance of the cowboy's horse and the love that the cowboy bore for him.

A good hobby to get going with students on various grade levels is *rope tying* - the different knots the cowboys used, how to throw the lariat and to make a loop. The lasso or lariat was an important tool of the cowboy.

Like most of the articles of his trade, the cowboy had inherited all of this from the Mexican cowboy, the Vacquero, who traced his ancestry back to that of the Spanish caballero. And where had the Spanish caballero learned all this from? Why from the Moors, who when they invaded Spain from Africa, brought over their knowledge of horses and cattle.

The first cattle and horses were brought to the new world by Columbus on the orders of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. As for the Moors, they can trace their heritage of horseman all the way back to Ghneghis of Khan and his warriors.

The cowboy boot, which is the rage today worn by millions of men and women who have never sat upon a horse, was originally the mark of the horseman, the warrior. It set him above the man on foot, who was not his match in combat. So to wear a boot was a mark of distinction.

##########

Introduce students to the Western theme as portrayed by classical music. Once they have become acquainted with folksongs and have enjoyed learning some of the cowboy songs, they can now listen to the way some composers have taken these themes and woven them into classical music. They are much better able to sit and listen and appreciate them with the background they have not gotten from the folksongs.

Aaron Copeland, *Billy the Kid*
Aaron Copeland, *Rodeo*, also a ballet
Ferdi Grofe's, *Grand Canyon Suite*

##########

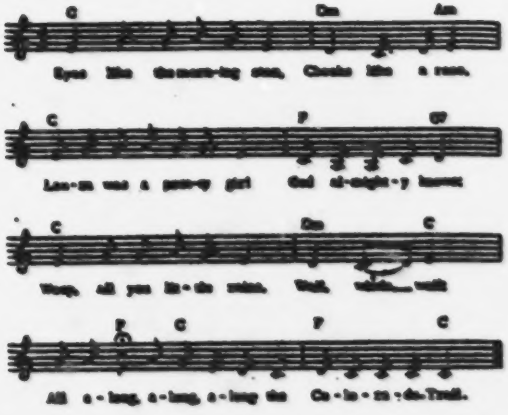
More vocabulary from song

cut out the strays - take out those cattle that did not belong to the herd and that might have accidentally gotten mixed in with them, so that their rightful owners can reclaim them.

bob off their tails - the cattle's tails were cut off to make them less vulnerable to being caught in the underbrush and thickets. Done when branding cattle.

throw those dogies - lead them up on the trail to resume their journey in the morning.

COLORADO TRAIL



Ride all the lonely night,
Ride all the day,
Keep 'em head a-rollin' on,
Ridin' on its way;
Weep all ye little rains,
Wail, winds, wail;
All along, along, along
The Colorado Trail

Eyes like the morning star,
Cheeks like a rose,
Laura was a pretty girl
God almighty knows;
Weep all ye little rains
Wail, winds, wail;
All along, along, along
The Colorado Trail

Ride through the stormy night,
Dark is the sky,
Wish I'd stayed in Abilene,
Nice and warm and dry;
Weep all ye little rains,
Wail, winds, wail;
All along, along, along
The Colorado Trail

Eyes like the morning star,
Cheeks like a rose,
Laura was a pretty girl
God almighty knows;
Weep all ye little rains,
Wail, winds, wail;
All along, along, along
The Colorado Trail

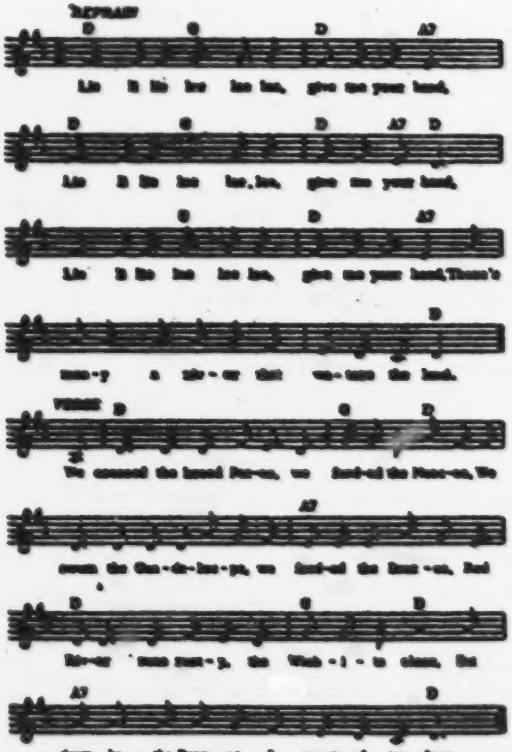
Colorado Trail comes to us thanks to Carl Sandburg, who first published it in 1924 in his *American Songbag*. He learned it from a doctor in a Minnesota hospital who in turn learned it from a cowboy who lay in bed there for several months while his broken bones mended.

This cowboy, it seems, didn't do much else while he lay in bed, except to hum and sing *Colorado Trail* over and over. It was one man's companion in a time of pain and loneliness and helped him to survive. This tells us something of the quality of this song. These few simple words evidently have an inexhaustible freshness, an inner life and mystery of their own.

Colorado Trail was sung by cowboys crooning to the herds as they watched them by night, beguiling the long hours in the saddle by day. But tradition too and the long centuries of our singing history are echoed in the refrain "Weep all ye little rains, wail winds wail." The British Museum has a sixteenth century manuscript recording an ancient medieval song with the following verse:

> Western wind, when wilt thou blow?
> The small rain down can rain!
> Christ, that my love were in my arms,
> And I in my bed again

Colorado Trail is perhaps one of the most beautiful and moving songs in all our heritage; but you'll find that few if any of our students are familiar with it (let us know if you find the contrary!). That's really a shame, and maybe you can do something about it. *Colorado Trail* belongs to all of us; it should not be permitted to die.

DOWN BY THE BRAZOS

REFRAIN
D G D A7
Lie ll lie lee lee lee, give me your hand,
D G D A7 D
Lie ll lie lee lee,lee, give me your hand,
G D A7
Lie ll lie lee lee lee, give me your hand,There's
D
many a riv-er that wa-ters the land.
VERSE D G D
We crossed the broad Pe-os, we forded the Nue-ces, We
A7
swam the Gu-a-lu-pe, we found the Braz-os, Red
D G D
Riv-er runs rust-y, the Wich-i-ta clear, But
A7 D
down by the Braz-os I court-ed my dear.

refrain: Lie ll lie lee lee lee, give me your hand,
Lie ll lie lee lee lee, give me your hand,
Lie ll lie lee lee lee, give me your hand,
There's many a river that waters the land.

We crossed the broad Pecos, we forded the Nueces,
We swam the Guadalupe, we found the Brazos,
Red River runs rusty, the Wichita clear,
But down by the Brazos I courted my dear.

Lie ll lie lee lee lee, etc.

The fair Angelina runs glassy and gliding,
The cowhaid Colorado runs weaving and winding,
The broad San Antonio courses the plain,
But I never will walk by the Brazos again.

Lie ll lie lee lee lee, etc.

She hugged me, she kissed me, she called me her dandy,
The Trinity's muddy, the Brazos quicksandy,
She hugged me, she kissed me, she called me her own,
But down by the Brazos she left me alone.

Lie ll lie lee lee lee, etc.

The girls of New River are plump and they're pretty,
The Sabine and the Sulphur have many a beauty,
On the banks of the Natchez there's girls by the score,
But down by the Brazos I'll wander no more.

Lie ll lie lee lee lee, etc.

Down by the Brazos celebrates the rivers of Texas and the sorrows of a Texan. No one seems to know who wrote it, or when. We learned it from Alan Lomax, the well-known folklorist and collector of Southern songs. It was Alan's father John Lomax who pioneered the search for and the recording of American folk-song early in the 20th century, and who published in 1910 the pathbreaking *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (the 1938 edition of this book is still in print).

The value of *Down by the Brazos* for geography classes is considerable. Students will chart the rivers of Texas with fresh enthusiasm when their curiosity has been aroused by the singing of these beautiful names, Guadalupe, Brazos, Wichita, Pecos, Trinity and Natchez. The song, too, is helpful in teaching history. Students familiar with this song will follow with greater keenness the story of the Mexican-American war. This conflict began in 1846 in the broad strip of territory that lies between the Nueces and the Rio. This was the "spot" concerning which Lincoln submitted his famous "spot resolutions" to the House of Representatives that year.

DOWN BY THE BRAZOS

The importance of rivers to the cowboy should be pointed out to the students. Going north up the trail, he had to cross his herd over each and every stream and river in their path. There weren't any bridges or ferries.

The drives started out in the spring time when the fresh grass was sprouting up and often, the rivers were in flood from the melting snow and spring rains. The foreman and his scouts would look for a ford to cross at, but often they had to swim the herd across the swollen, rapidly running, cresting river.

While the cows could all swim, they might be swept downstream by the swift current or struck by a bobbing branch or log. Even worse, they might panic in the water and start to mill -- swim in circles. If the cowboys did not break this up at once, the cattle would tire and drown.

So into this melee of frightened, bawling cattle, the cowpuncher would have to plunge his horse, hoping he wouldn't be gored or upset and thrown into the water among the kicking hooves. Swimming his horse directly into the mill, the cowboy would strike them with his hat and hands yelling and trying to encourage them to straighten out and continue swimming for the other side. Many a cowboy just disappeared from his horse and might be found days or weeks later, drowned downstream.

Somehow, the herd was gotten across and the drive continued, with a wooden cross marking the grave of the cowboy who had "given his all."

As the song indicates, not all rivers flowed the same way or at the same speed. Each had their danger spots, their patches of quicksand, their deep holes. Each was a challenge that had to be met.

New herds coming up the trail meant that you could not just sit and wait until the river eased back down. Other herds would be across and you'd be eating their dust for the thousand miles up the trail, competing for grass and water. So each foreman tried to get his herd across as soon as possible, no matter what the dangers.

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More Bibliography for Working Teachers and Students on the Cowboy

For an overall look at the history and story of those Texas cattle, J. Frank Dobie's, *The Longhorns*, is the classic book. Reissued in paperback by Grosset & Dunlap: New York.

Ramon F. Adams tells the story of the Old Cowboy Cook in his *Come an' Get It*. Put out in paperback by the University of Oklahoma.

The definitive account of life on the trail is Andy Adams, *The Log of A Cowboy*, by Doubleday & Company, in a Dolphine paperback edition.

Another good account of a working cowboy is Charles Siringo's *A Texas Cowboy or Fifteen Years on the Hurricane Deck of a Spanish Pony* reissued in paperback form by the University of Nebraska Press.

For a well-documented account of the role of the Black cowboys, see Philip Durham and Everett L. Jones, *The Negro Cowboys*, Dodd, Mead & Co.

SUMMERTIME- ********* SUMMERTIME ********* SUMMERTIME ********

Laurie will be away this summer-July and first half of August. Checks, letters and request for materials can be sent to his address as always. However, if you need an immediate answer to something special, between July and August 20th WRITE, CALL, OR VISIT Tony, at his lakeside cabin - near old Sturbridge Village

RFD 2 · Southbridge, MASS 01550 413-245-3254

Additional Items and Comments Pertinent to the Last Issue on Colonial Times, March # 3.

Soldier, Soldier, Won't You Marry Me?

We forgot to mention that there is a lovely picture book for this song. The verses have been compiled by John Langstaff and the colorful illustrations are by Anita Lobel. Both the words and music are given for the song. The young lady, however, is depicted as a very young lady, a child, possibly the daughter of the soldier--so that the whole message of the song is changed. Nevertheless, a charming book and one that is worthwhile becoming familiar with.

Doubleday & Company, 1972.

****

More About Pins -- and song, Paper Of Pins

Other explanations about why pins are good luck and why you should pick them up if you see one, is given by Alvin Schwartz in his book about superstitions, *Cross Your Fingers and Spit In Your Hat.*

The rhyme and pins have to do with witches "since they use bits and pieces of metal to cast their spell. If you come upon a pin therefore and let it lie, the witch might find it, which could be bad luck for somebody.

"But if the pin points away from you, don't touch it. Circle it until it points toward you. Then, pick it up -- and keep it. Another way to use pins to prevent a witch from harming you and if you're having bad luck and want to break the spell is:

"Add one package of pins and one package of needles to a large pot of boiling water. Then wait patiently. The pins, needles and the boiling water will cause the witch such pain, that eventually she will appear at your door and beg for mercy. But give her none, until she removes the spell and promises never to again harm you.

An old nursery and/or Mother Goose rhyme is:

Needles and pins, needles and pins,
When a man marries his troubles
Begin.

****

Tune of Father Abby's Will

It is an old British marching tune entitled "The Girl I Left Behind Me." It is probably from the 17th century. It became very popular with the folk and was used both as a marching and dancing tune in the United States. It made its way out West and became a cowboy and cavalry song.

##

The Fox Went Out On A Chilly Night

A delightful picture book that would be useful here is by the Swedish writer, Astrid Lindgren (the author of the Pippi Longstocking and Bill Bergerson, Boy Detective books).

The title is *The Tomten and The Fox.* It tells a lively story of the hungry fox who leaves his den in the woods to find something to eat in the wintertime. The fox creeps silently toward the farm where all the barnyard animals are sleeping. But he finds the farm and all its inhabitants protected by an old tomten (a little elf).

The tomten warns the fox not to harm the animals, but as he is a wise little person, he knows that foxes too are hungry. He gives him a bowl of porridge. The fox eats it and satisfies his hunger and thanks the tomten and returns to his den. The children of the farm never see the old tomten (he is invisible to them) but they know he is there, for every night they fill his bowl with porridge and in the morning the bowl is empty!

Charmingly illustrated by Harold Wiberg, this is a story that bridges cultures and shows once more how universal folklore and people are. Children will appreciate the song even more after hearing the story.

Coward McCann 1968.

FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES - A NEWSLETTER

Checklist of Free Materials

Send for these useful, free materials. All we ask is that you enclose *an IRV* stamp for each item over ten pages. We have the envelopes. Fair enough?

Besides the materials listed below, all of the items mentioned in issues # 2 and # 3 are still available. We would love to send them to you for your use and pleasure.

Free Materials----

----- A Teacher's Guide to the paperback, *Once In The Saddle: The Cowboy's Frontier 1866-1890* by Seidman. New American Library, 2 pages.

----- *A Pot Pourri of Teaching Ideas of the American Cowboy and the West.* All grade levels, K-12 compiled by working classroom teachers. Plus the words and melodies for 3 more songs -- *Black Jack Davey, Night Herding Song* and *I'm A Poor Lonesome Cowboy* -- songs which we could not fit into this issue but which are beautiful ones. (22 pages - covers art, music, dramatics, language arts, social studies, values) Reprinted from issue # 2.

Folksong Workshops (continued)

Towards Humanizing Education - 12th Annual Conference - early April, 1982 Concord Motel, Kiamesha Lake, N.Y.

----- *Account of Teaching Folklore/Folksong to High School Juniors* by Anne Marie Billingsley-Riedman. (see page 3) 4 pages.

----- *Using Folk Music Materials as Resources for Vocabulary and Comprehension Skill Development* by Sharon Ritt (see page 4). Send 30¢ - over 11 pages +

Join Nation Department:

Aileen Fraser, Music Supervisor of the Rochester Public Schools has sent in a subscription for 50 copies of all of our issues of *Folksong In The Classroom*. She plans to distribute them to each of her teachers. Don't let Rochester lead the way alone. Talk to your Principal, Chairman, Superintendent -- and let them adopt this idea.

Folksong Workshops to be Given by Editors

Caldwell, Idaho - tentatively scheduled for September 1981 (still to be confirmed)

New York Outdoor Education Association Annual Meeting October 1981 Saratoga, NY

Annual national convention of National Council for the Social Studies November 1981 Detroit

Materials From Other Sources - still free -- but write directly to addresses given.

Information about the fascination of storytelling -- and professional storytellers

National Storytelling Resource Center
P.O. Box 112
Jonesborough, TN 37659

A marvelous collection of materials for teaching about children and people of the world around us. Bibliographies, lesson plans, arts and craft projects -- all kinds of wonderful and useful items are offered by the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. Write to them and ask for their free catalog of publications and educational materials:

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